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GOLDEN DAYS.

BY EDWARD OXENFORD.

Tho' the waiting hours be weary,
They in time will pass away;
All be brightness where life's shadows
Seem to lengthen day by day!

Sorrow'd hearts will wake from sadness,
All forget the bitter past,
Fill'd for ever be with gladness,—
Golden days will dawn at last!

Hours that have been long and weary
Now for ever pass away;
Life for us be sunshine only,
Growing brighter day by day!

Bliss rewards the constant-hearted,
Love! all doubts and fears are past;
Ev'ry ling'ring grief departed—
Golden days have dawn'd at last!

HER MAD REVENGE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MRS. BRUCE'S entertainments were always among the most brilliant and successful of the season, and the ball which she gave to wind up the season was no exception.

As host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce were unsurpassed, even in the set in which they moved. They were wealthy, they had unexceptional taste, they were extremely sociable, and both being still on the sunny side of forty, were, therefor, young enough to enjoy the pleasures they so liberally provided for their guests.

The beautiful ball-room was profusely and most tastefully decorated with innumerable flowers, the illumination was soft yet brilliant, the music perfection, and all the prettiest women and eligible men in London were present. Mrs. Bruce herself, exquisitely dressed and ablaze with diamonds, moved about among her guests, saying exactly what was right to each, seeing that all the pretty girls had partners—the "wall-flower" was an unknown plant at Mrs. Bruce's balls—and her husband seconded her admirably, passing from group to group with facile compliment and courteous smiles.

But perfect as all her arrangements were, there was a cloud on the hostess's fair brow and a feeling of disappointment at her heart. She had hoped that her last ball would have been graced by the presence of the beautiful heiress who had shunned many similar entertainments during the season with which this ball was to close, but who had smilingly promised her to be here to-night. And now it was growing late, and Miss Hamilton had not yet arrived.

"I am afraid she will not come, Fred," said Mrs. Bruce ruefully, to her husband, as they encountered each other in the gay throng.

"Who will not come, dear?" he asked, smiling at the pretty, anxious face, and admiring the graceful dark head which rose so proudly above the glittering diamond collar. "It seems to me that everyone is here."

"Mabel Hamilton is not," she replied, with a pout, "and I counted upon seeing her this evening. She promised to come."

"She is not well," he answered. "I have just been speaking to Lady Saxby, who saw her this afternoon. The heat has upset her, I suppose."

"Oh! I am so sorry," Mrs. Bruce said regretfully. "It is not too late for her to come yet, but if she is not well I must do my best to console poor Geoff Hamilton. He looks the picture of disappointment."

She glided away, and was going towards the door, near which Geoffrey Hamilton was standing, looking, as Mrs. Bruce had said, the picture of disappointment, when suddenly her face changed and brightened, and the change upon it was reflected on the young man's expressive countenance. Standing in the doorway—a glittering white figure, with diamonds about her throat and in her dark hair—was the girl whose non-appearance she had just been regretting.

"Better late than never," she said brightly. "I had almost given you up. But it is sweet of you to have come! Lady Saxby has been telling Fred that you were not well this afternoon, but she must have been mistaken. You look—how do you think she looks, Mr. Hamilton?"

The young man was so confused and bewildered at this sudden joy coming when he had become hopeless of Bell's appearance, that he could only murmur a few low-spoken words.

The girl looked at him kindly; her beauty dazzled him so that he could not see the sadness which lay under the kindliness of the lustrous eyes, and his heart was throbbing quickly with delight because she was carrying the flowers he had sent on. Mrs. Bruce looked at him with a touch of compassion softening her bright eyes.

"He is dreadfully in love with her," she thought; "but I am afraid she is quite indifferent to him. If she were not, it would be a good arrangement. I always thought poor Geoff was badly treated by his uncle's wife."

"I will leave Miss Hamilton in your care, Geoff," she said aloud. "You must not let her fatigue herself in anyway. It is so good of her to come and adorn my rooms that I should never forgive myself if she were over fatigued!"

"I will take care her, if she will let me," Geoffrey said earnestly, as the girl put her little, white-gloved hand upon his arm.

But before he could take her from the threshold of the ball-room, they were surrounded by a crowd of solicitous cavaliers, each eagerly craving the honor and pleasure of a dance.

"I shall not dance at all to-night," Bell said, with her chill, pretty, haughty grace of manner; "I am only going to remain an hour."

She met the entreaties and remonstrances with which this was received with smiling indifference; proud and calm as she looked, she was too weary, too worn out by the events of the past few hours, to answer them with the careless, witty, brilliant badinage, that was usual with her in society, and as she dismissed the admiring little court which had crowded round her, she wondered a little as to how they would treat her if they knew the truth.

"Would they all crowd around me then?" she asked herself bitterly. "Rather, would there be one among them who would touch my hand? No, they would certainly all avoid me as though I were a leper and unfit for human contact."

"It is a pretty ball," she said, in a low, rather wistful tone, as she stood looking down the brilliant rooms through which the dance music echoed so sweetly and gaily.

"It is a pretty ball now," Geoffrey said softly, looking down at her with a world of passionate admiration in his blue eyes. "I thought just now that it would be a failure."

"Why?" she asked absently.

Her dark eyes straying down the room had caught sight of a familiar face among the dancers; a grave, handsome dark face with a slightly worn look upon it, which had not been there when she had seen it first, in the dim candle light of the room in the Cheval Blanc at Derdignon, where Mrs. Hamilton's will had been signed, and she instantly looked away from the place where Alick Holt stood with his partner.

"Why?" Geoffrey echoed softly. "Can you ask?"

"Why should I not?" she rejoined carelessly.

"I thought you would not be here," he answered reproachfully.

"And would my absence have made Mrs. Bruce's function a failure?" she asked languidly.

"It would be to me," he answered softly, yet boldly. "Will you come into the conservatories, since you are not going to dance?"

For a moment Bell hesitated; she felt sick at heart—bitter, scornful, intensely miserable: the light, the perfume, the gay music, the bright faces of the dancers were hateful to her, but she had her part to play.

"Shall we try the gardens?" she said, with a little constraint in her voice.

She had come to the ball to see him, yet now as she stood beside him with her hand upon his arm, she dreaded the question he might ask as to her illness of the afternoon.

"If he speaks to me of Pauline, I shall break down and tell him all," she thought miserably. "What shall I do? He does not look cruel, but one can never be sure. His friend does not look cruel either, and yet——"

"Ah!" she said aloud, with a long sigh of relief as the soft cool fingers of the night air touched her throbbing temples. "It is lovely here, is it not?"

"It is lovely anywhere with you?" the young artist murmured.

He led her into the garden, where the still summer night reigned supreme, lighted softly by the innumerable Chinese lanterns, which glowed like richly-tinted, jewelled fruits, among the dark foliage of the trees and shrubs. No wonder all Mrs. Bruce's friends and acquaintances envied her her garden; few other houses in the great city could boast of such an one.

The night was very fair and soft, the dance music from within sounded gay and pretty, softened as it was by distance; the Chinese lanterns burned softly; there was no one in the gardens but themselves; as yet, none of Mrs. Bruce's guests had wearied of the brilliancy of the ball-room, or sought the *solitude a deux* which is so delightful under some circumstances, so unendurable in others.

Geoffrey had wrapped a great white lace shawl about the young girl at his side; his heart was throbbing fast as he walked beside her, the delicate perfume of her flowers reached him, he could see her profile, pale and pure and beautiful; the glitter of the diamonds in her hair, the sweep of her long lashes, the little white satin shoes peeping like mice from under her lace-edged skirts; his admiration, his passion for her increased momentarily; he forgot her great wealth; he forgot that if he wooed her she might think his wooing interested, and himself mercenary; he forgot all save her beauty and charm.

The girl herself was unconscious of the admiration in the blue eyes fixed upon her; she was almost unconscious of his presence, even while her hand rested upon his arm. She was thinking of the terrible hours she had spent in her own room, of the scarcely less terrible interview with Dorcas Fane, and of that momentary yet awful struggle with herself which had resulted in her coming to the ball.

She was a brave woman, and, like most of her sex, a good actress; but this calm, sweet night seemed to make a coward of her. She wondered if she would have the courage to carry through this last despairing project, courage to commit this last worst wrong of all, and purchase Dorcas Fane's safety and her own by marrying a man for whom she had not one particle of love.

"You are really better?" the young man said gently. "You look pale still, but when I called at your house, your maid said you had quite recovered. I hope it is so."

"Oh, yes, I am quite well," she replied, in a low tone. "I am sorry to have distressed you this afternoon. Will you forgive me for my weakness?"

He looked at her with ardent, longing eyes.

"Is there anything I would not forgive you?" he said earnestly, and the girl's heart leaped up for a moment at the tenderness in his words and tone, then sank heavily. "I am only too grieved to think that your kindness in coming to my studio exposed you to the shock which made you faint."

Bell shivered a little under her long, soft lace wrappings, warm as the night was. It seemed as if a sudden breath had passed over her, chilling her in every limb.

"I did not expect to see a portrait of my sister," she said, in a low tone. "She was—my only sister, and——"

She paused for a moment, her dry lips seemed incapable of further speech; then she went on steadily, but with an effort.

"She died suddenly and under very painful circumstances," she said. "That was why the——"

"Pray say no more!" the young man entreated gently. "I am yet more grieved at the thought of your suffering."

"It was not—it was not your fault," she answered, looking at him suddenly with kind, piteous eyes.

"Nor, I am sure, was Leclerc aware that the lady whom he had known was your sister," he said eagerly. "The change of name, you know, and——"

A little bitter laugh broke from the girl's lips.

"No, I am sure he did not know it," she said; then rapidly: "He is a great friend of yours, is he not?"

"Yes," Geoffrey answered simply. "We have been friends for many a long year. He is older than I am by a few years, and I owe him many a kindness."

"You owe *him*——" she began abruptly, then paused.

He little knew what he owed to Fulton Leclerc.

"Shall we sit down?" she said wearily, after a short pause.

"It will not be too cold for you?" he said anxiously.

"Cold! To-night?"

"But a minute ago I thought you shivered."

"I think you must have been mistaken," she said carelessly. "I am not the least bit cold."

There were garden seats in abundance in Mrs. Bruce's garden, and two of these softly-cushioned wicker seats stood near them under the shadow of a Spanish chestnut tree, which was the glory of the pretty grounds. Bell sank down rather wearily on the crimson cushions. Her white dress gleamed palely in the darkness, for the light of the Chinese lanterns did not penetrate the shadow cast by the spreading branches. Even Geoffrey Hamilton's eager eyes could see nothing of the expression on her beautiful pale face, but he heard the little, low sigh of utter weariness which escaped the sweet, pale lips he would have given the world to touch with his own.

"You are tired?" he said gently. "Do you think you did right in coming out to-night?"

She shivered slightly at the question. It seemed almost ironically spoken just then. She turned her face towards him with a

sudden irrepressible emotion making her voice tremble.

"I never do anything right," she said. "All my life I have done wrong! If you knew me really, you would not dare to sit with me here. You would think the sweet summer night desecrated by my presence."

"I should not dare!" he said softly, with a little low laugh of supreme contempt. "What is there I would not dare to be by your side for half-an-hour?"

She turned her face from him with a swift, keen pang of pain piercing the dull, numbed, suffering of her heart. She felt, and felt with shame, that her task was an easy one; if he did not love her now, he would do so soon, and it would be easy to win his pardon for herself and for Dorcas.

Yet was not this thing she was doing the greatest wrong of all? She did not love him, she would never feel any warmer affection towards him than she felt now, and that was a faint friendship touched with pity, and full of a remorseful consciousness of the wrong, the undeserved wrong, she had done him. But she had promised Dorcas; and Dorcas had been faithful to her—she must be faithful to Dorcas.

"I have not yet thanked you for these lovely flowers," she said, after a moment's pause. "It was so good of you to send them."

"You have thanked me in the way I like best," he answered gently; "you have made me the happiest of men by carrying them to-night!"

"It is easy, then, to make you the happiest of men," she replied, trying to speak lightly. "I owe you some compensation, too, for my foolish behavior this afternoon. What"—she hesitated a little, as if she found some difficulty in expressing herself—"what did Mr. Leclerc think of my absurd fainting fit?"

Geoffrey Hamilton's fair, frank face clouded a little; he had been displeased and disappointed and greatly puzzled by his friend's manner, and Leclerc's refusal to give him any explanation, and he had not seen him since they had parted in the little smoking-room.

"He was sorry, of course," he said, rather vaguely; "but he did not know that it was your sister's portrait."

"No! Did he tell you when he knew my sister?" Bell said calmly, her heart throbbing wildly as she awaited his answer.

"No; he refused to speak of his acquaintance with her! He did not know, I think, that she was dead; nor did I, until you said so just now. I am so grieved and sorry," he continued earnestly, "that you should have had so serious a wound roughly torn open this afternoon."

"It is an always open wound," she answered faintly. "Some day, if you will let me, I will tell you Pauline's story."

"If I will let you!" he echoed softly; and they were silent for a few moments.

"Tell me something about your friend," Bell said, rousing herself, and speaking hurriedly, and with an effort. "He is a clever artist, I believe?"

"Oh, yes; very clever! He has a picture in this year's Academy, hung on the line."

"And that is, of course, the height of a painter's ambition?"

"Yes," he replied, smiling; "that and the right to put the two magical letters 'R. A.' after his name."

"He is well off?"

"Leclerc? No, he is not well off in your interpretation of the words, Miss Hamilton. He is rich though, compared to myself."

"Indeed! Then he is rich enough to marry a portionless girl, if—if he cared for her?" Bell said eagerly.

"I think so," he replied, smiling. "But I think even myself well enough off to do that if I wished to. He is not of the same opinion, and he has always determined to 'marry money.' He is going to be married to Miss Bradley," he added carelessly; "she is the only child and sole heiress of the great brewer of that name."

"Ah, she is very rich, I suppose. Is she pretty?"

"No, not at all pretty. She's a nice little woman though, pleasant and unaffected."

"Does he care for her?" the girl asked, in a low voice.

"He is not in love with her," Geoffrey answered, smiling. "Leclerc is very susceptible to beauty, and she has none, but I think he will not be unkind to her."

"Is she in society?"

"Oh, yes. She is here this evening," he answered, laughing. "Half a million of money is an excellent 'open sesame.'"

"As I have found," Bell said languidly. "If you have an opportunity will you point out this lady to me, Mr. Hamilton?"

"With pleasure," he answered promptly. "Leclerc is not on duty to-night, although he ought to have been here."

"How is it that I have not seen him until to-day?" she asked.

"He has been away in Norway," he rejoined; "otherwise he is very much sought after, and you would certainly have met him."

"I wish I had," the girl said, under her breath.

The was a lull in the dance music now; other couples were seeking coolness and quietude in the garden; there was a soft, subdued sound of voices and laughter, the *frou frou* of silken skirts.

Bell leaned back upon the crimson cushion of her chair, and closed her eyes; one thought kept beating itself into her brain; it was yet possible to avenge her sister's death in some way. She might, if she choose, wrest the rich heiress from his grasp; Miss Bradley could scarcely be willing to marry a false and perjured traitor at whose door lay the guilt of her sister's death!

"Let us go back to the house," she said, rising suddenly. "The charm of the gardens is lost now that our dual solitude is broken. Hark! the music is beginning again, and they are playing my favorite waltz, 'Dreamland.' I will change my mind about dancing as I did about coming to the ball! If you wish, I will dance this waltz with you?"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE waltz had already begun when they reached the ball room: the soft melody rose and fell upon the perfumed air; the roses, oppressed by the heated air, were drooping their graceful heads; the gay colors of the dresses; the glitter of jewels, the dark forms of the men were mingled in one curious, many-colored mass before Bell's eyes as she put her hand on her companion's shoulder and they floated away together.

Angry and admiring looks followed them as they glided away. Miss Hamilton's announcement that she was not going to dance had been at one and the same time disappointing and consoling to the rejected aspirants to her dances; but those who had accepted the answer as her ultimatum felt their "angry passions rise" at the favor she had shown to Geoffrey Hamilton, who was a mere nobody in the world of fashion where so many of them held high and prominent positions. Bell cared little for, indeed scarcely noticed, the frowning glances which followed them.

She had danced on the impulse of a moment with a wild longing at her heart that the excitement, the swift movement should disperse the thought which had flashed into her mind, the the temptation which had assailed her.

But she was disappointed in her desire; even as she whirled around in Geoffrey Hamilton's arms, the thought was beating itself into her brain, growing every instant clearer, that vengeance was within her grasp now, and that before she atoned to Geoffrey for the wrong she had done him, it was possible to her to make Fulton Leclerc suffer, as much as it was possible for him to suffer.

She would go to Miss Bradley; she would tell her her sister's story she would show her the letters he had written to Pauline; she would prove to her that he was, in truth, Pauline's murderer; and then his rich marriage would not come to pass; the wealth for which he longed, which was almost in his grasp, would be lost to him. Ah! if only he loved this woman to whom he was betrothed, how much deeper her vengeance could reach!

All her remorse, all her penitence had faded from her mind. All the terrible sense of sin, which had bowed her to the earth a few hours before,—all the horror of her own conduct, which had made her hateful in her own eyes,—all the hatred of her sin, which had torn her heart in twain, were as if they had never existed.

Once more her evil genius triumphed over her better nature,—once more she saw but one aim and end for her existence; vengeance on the man who had wronged her sister, and blighted, by that wrong her own life.

Geoffrey Hamilton, holding her exquisite form in his arms, as they floated around the brilliant room, little guessed the storm which was raging in the heart which throbbed so near his own; he himself was in the seventh heaven of delight.

The soft swell of the music, the softly lighted rooms, the perfumes of the fragrant flowers, above all, the fact that he had been singled out as the sole recipient of her favor to-night,—all these combined to make him forget everything but that he was young, that he loved, and that the object of his love was in his own arms,—and that she had spoken kindly to him, had looked kindly at him with her beautiful, lustrous eyes,—that something in her manner had made him almost hopeful!

Everything else was forgotten; He saw nothing but the lovely face to which the movement had given a faint rose-tint, like a sea-shell, the starry eyes, bright yet languid, the sweet, parted lips which some day, perhaps, he would have the right to touch with his own!

He could have danced on for ever, when suddenly he felt her slender form grow heavy upon his arm; and, looking at her, he saw that her white lids were drooping over the sweet eyes.

With a rapid, skilful movement, he whirled her out of the circle of the dancers, and led her, half-fainting, into the cool, sweet air of the fragrant summer night. It revived her instantly; and even while he bent over her anxiously, she looked at him with her languid eyes and smiled.

"That was a perfect waltz, was it not?" she said dreamily. "Our steps suit to perfection."

"It had but one fault," the young man said passionately, yet in a low tone which seemed to suit the time and place: "it was too short!"

She laughed lightly, but before she could reply, two of Mrs. Bruce's guests came from behind a clump of evergreens, and drew near them; a tall, slender man, a slight, small woman, with a circle of glittering gems about her white throat.

Geoffrey Hamilton felt Bell's hand close suddenly upon his arm, and as he glanced at her he saw that her gaze was fixed upon them; his eyes followed the direction of hers.

"It is Leclerc and Miss Bradley," he said; "they are coming this way! May I introduce her to you now, Miss Hamilton?"

"If you will I shall be pleased," she answered calmly, making a step or two towards them.

At the sound of their voices, Leclerc, whose head had been bent over his companion, looked up suddenly, with a little start. Bell's dark eyes were upon his face, and she saw that he changed color and grew very pale. But he recovered his self-possession almost instantly, and advanced towards her with almost all his usual grace and calmness.

"I am glad to see that you are sufficiently recovered to be here," he said, in the low, musical tones which were one of this man's greatest charms.

Bell, with a strong effort, mastered the shrinking from him which assailed her as he drew near, but she could not help the coldness of her voice as she answered:

"Thank you, I am quite well. My illness of this afternoon was a very trifling one. I am glad to meet you here," she went on, a little hurriedly, looking at him proudly and calmly, and a little significantly, "because I am going to ask you to give me the pleasure of an introduction to Miss Bradley."

For a moment Fulton Leclerc's calm self-possession failed him; there was, to his ears, something so intensely significant in her tone, so defiant in the dark eyes that met his, that he was startled, almost alarmed; but he was too much a man of the world to let his sudden and unaccountable dismay be visible.

"I—and Miss Bradley—will be charmed, I am sure," he said calmly. "Cecilia, let me do you the honor of presenting you to Miss Hamilton, of whom you have heard, of course, as all London has!"

"I did not know I was such a notorious person," Bell said languidly, with a sudden, swift little pang of pain at the thought that his half-mocking words might yet be true, and all London might hear of her. "Miss Bradley will be alarmed at the prospect of an acquaintance with so great a celebrity, and I should be sorry for that, as I was going to ask permission to call upon her. I have wished to make her acquaintance since I made yours, Mr. Leclerc, this afternoon!"

Fulton Leclerc glanced at her suddenly with a somewhat deprecating look, and as their eyes met, a sudden sense of familiarity struck Bell with a feeling that it was not the first time they had met when they had been introduced to each other in the studio that afternoon.

In a flash the recollection came to her; the softly-lighted gardens seemed to fade from her eyes; it was no longer night. The brilliant July sunshine was pouring into the railway car, where she sat with her book open in her hand, and lifting her eyes from its pages she met the smiling and admiring gaze of a pair of bold blue eyes opposite her.

Like lightning, the occasion, the scene, the time all flashed upon her. It was the last happy day her young life had known, the day on which Pauline died, when she, returning home from school, had travelled for a short space in the same car as the man who even then had written the letter which had broken her sister's heart. And she, unknowing, had laughed and jested with him, and had never for a moment associated him with her sister's lover and betrayer.

The recognition had been simultaneous; Leclerc also had remembered the pretty red-lipped girl who had amused him during part of his journey, and whom he had for a brief moment associated with Pauline. Some indefinable dread struck him with the recollection, caused, perhaps, by the sudden strange menace in Bell's shining eyes.

He was not the only one who noticed that strange look; the pale, pretty little woman on his arm saw it also, and the color faded from her lips, as she looked with startled eyes from Bell's beautiful, stern face to her lover's startled and shame-stricken one; she could scarcely find presence of mind enough to murmur a few words of the pleasure she felt at making Miss Hamilton's acquaintance.

"Has Mr. Leclerc never spoken of me to you?" Bell said, feeling a sudden keen sense of the exultation in the vexation and fear on the artist's handsome face. "We renewed an old acquaintance this afternoon, which I fear he has forgotten. We traveled together once for a short distance, and," with a little mocking laugh, "he mistook me for a cousin of his own! My name was not Hamilton then, Miss Bradley, it was Stanley. You remember it, Mr. Leclerc?"

"If you will recall the occasion, you will remember that you did not tell me your name," he replied, with some embarrassment, looking at her with something almost like entreaty in his eyes, wondering what she would say next, yet longing to hear something of her sister—whether it was true, as Grace Digby had said, that she was dead and if so when and how she died.

Bell laughed, with the same mocking intonation.

"It is not usual to give one's name and address to a chance fellow-traveler, is it, Miss Bradley?" she said, lightly. "If I had known Mr. Leclerc better, I might have done so. But I was only a schoolgirl in those days,—indeed, I had only left school a day or two before that on which we travelled together, so that I might *sans le savoir*, have committed a breach of etiquette."

"I remember wishing you would do so," Leclerc said, trying to resume his old easy careless grace of manner; "I told you mine I think."

"Yes, and asked my own, if I am not mistaken," she replied coldly. "Of course it was a natural question, and I might have answered it by giving you the name of one of my schoolfellows—might not I?" People do assume names sometimes, do not they?—even their friends' names!"

Again her eyes, strangely menacing, mocking—exultant almost—met Leclerc's, and his sank beneath them. He saw that she knew the truth, and trembled as to what she would say next.

Miss Bradley, too, was listening eagerly; she was not very quick of preception, poor little heiress; but she could not fail to see that this was not merely ordinary ball room badinage, and that some deeper meaning lay under the careless seeming words. Leclerc glanced at her rather uneasily. If her suspicions were aroused, it might be difficult to set them at rest again; and if he was not in love with Cecilia Bradley he was very much in love with her half-million.

Geoffrey Hamilton also, stood silently listening to what passed, but silent as he was, a sense of great uneasiness was dispersing all the happiness of the previous blissful half-hour.

Could this proud, calm, mocking woman, whose dark eyes seemed full of sternness and displeasure, be the gentle, beautiful girl whose dark eyes had met his so kindly, who had smiled upon him, who had let him hold her in his arms in that never-to be-forgotten and most entrancing waltz?

What was this secret knowledge of each other which she and Leclerc so evidently possessed? Had the latter, as he, Geoffrey, could not help suspecting, wronged the beautiful woman whose face he had admired in his sketch-book, and who was Mabel's sister?

He had refused to answer any questions about his stay at Devonshire, but it was evidently then that he had met her, and perhaps he had won her love and cast it aside.

But, no it was not possible. Fulton had his faults, but he was a man of honor and a gentleman—it was impossible he should be guilty of such a foul sin as that!

"I am sure that Mr. Leclerc did not give

you an assumed one, Miss Hamilton," said the fair-haired little, pale-faced woman on Fulton's arm, endeavoring to smile and seem at her ease.

"I think he did not," Bell replied carelessly. "I forget what he did call himself on that occasion, but"—she glanced down at the flowers she held with a slight smile, then looked up at Leclerc as if to emphasize her words—"it was not Geoffrey Hamilton."

"Not Geoffrey Hamilton!" Miss Bradley repeated, in some amazement, while the eyes of the two young men met for a moment in a glance which in the one was questioning, almost suspicious, in the other was uncertain, shifting, irresolute. "Of course not. How should it be?"

"How should it be, indeed?" Bell repeated dreamily, and forcing a smile to her pale lips as her eyes rested for a moment half compassionately on Miss Bradley's face. "That was rather a strange speech of mine, but, perhaps, when we know each other better, it may admit of an explanation."

Her eyes, leaving Miss Bradley's face, rested on that of her fiance, which had grown very pale. He could read, even if he could not quite understand, the strange, meaning look which lay deep in the soft eyes, the chill, pitiless smile on her sweet lips.

What did she know? he wondered. Was she indeed Pauline's sister? He could not help a strange, vague feeling of uneasiness, even of terror, which, intangible as it was, made his heart beat more quickly. The uncertainty seemed harder to bear than the reality could be. He felt that he must know the truth.

"In virtue of our very old acquaintanceship, Miss Hamilton," he said, smiling and bending towards her with that deferential grace of manner none could assume more easily or more gracefully than he, "may I venture to ask for the pleasure of a dance this evening? Is your programme quite full?"

Bell looked at him in silence for a moment; the calmness and composure of his manner surprised her a little, and she hesitated to reply. Would it not be as well, she thought, to tell him that she knew the story of his treachery to Pauline?—or would it be best to let him remain in ignorance of her knowledge until he knew it from Miss Bradley's dismissal?

Had Bell known of Grace Digby's conversation with him that afternoon, there would have been no need for that hesitation, but she was ignorant of it.

"I have not a programme?" she said carelessly. "I did not mean to dance at all—but——"

"Since you have broken your resolution with regard to one, will you not do so with regard to another?" Leclerc said, bending towards her, "or is Geoffrey, lucky fellow that he is, privileged above all others?"

Bell glanced half sorrowfully at young Hamilton; he was talking a trifle absently to Miss Bradley, who had removed her hand from Leclerc's arm, and was fanning herself languidly, with some annoyance, even offence, on her pale little face—annoyance of which Fulton Leclerc was entirely unconscious or, perhaps, indifferent to.

"Why do you say 'lucky'?" Bell asked suddenly. "Is it because you are his friend?"

There was no mistaking the insulting, contemptuous emphasis on the personal pronoun. A slight flush rose in Fulton Leclerc's face, a swift, angry light flashed into his blue eyes.

"That is one reason," he said calmly. "A sincere friendship, such as mine is for Geoff, is a matter of congratulation."

"It has been to him," she replied, looking at him steadily. "He little knows how much he owes to it!"

The flush faded from the painter's cheek; there was the same strange, threatening look in her eyes, the same chill smile on her lips; for a moment he found his self-possession, great as it was, desert him, and he looked at her in a startled, almost frightened manner. But he recovered himself almost immediately.

"You have not yet told me whether I am to have the honor of a waltz," he said, smiling as he looked down at her. "This quadrille is to be followed by a polka, but the polka, in its turn is to be succeeded by a waltz. May I have it, if it is not already promised?"

"It is not promised, certainly," she replied carelessly.

"Then will you not give it to me?" he pleaded; then, as she still hesitated, he went on eagerly, but in a low tone: "Will it not be wiser to give it to me? If you dance only with Hamilton, such unusual favor cannot fail to attract attention and cause comment. Unless you wish to do so, you will dance with me?"

Bell laughed a little mockingly.

"You are not complimentary," she said, with a sneer. "Do you suppose that my choice of partners is limited to you and Mr. Hamilton?"

"I should indeed be blind to think so," he replied, bowing. "But may I be pardoned for saying that our old acquaintanceship entitles me to share the favor you have shown to Geoffrey."

"You shall share it," she replied calmly. "I will give you the dance you ask for, Mr. Leclerc; you will find me here when the music strikes up."

"How can I thank you?" he exclaimed softly, but she raised her little gloved hand as if entreating, or rather commanding silence.

"Pray do not endeavor to do so," she said carelessly. "The favor I show you will not deserve thanks."

As she spoke, her eyes met his with that strange, threatening, relentless look, and the same chill smile curved her lips. He bowed in silence; he saw that, sooner or later, he should know all that was in her heart against him, and he waited with the intangible dread at his own heart which is sometimes harder to bear than the certainty of misery.

No one looking at the graceful group, on which the soft light of the Chinese lanterns fell, as they stood together among the trees and shrubs which made so charming a setting for the picture, could have had any suspicion of the tumult of feeling that throbbed in every heart.

Geoffrey Hamilton, standing calm and high-bred-looking, by Miss Bradley, was anxious, and restless, and unhappy; he distrusted his friend, and that distrust alone was sufficient to give the sensitive young fellow acute pain, for his friendship with Fulton had been long and sincere, and he had loved him well. Could it be, he wondered sorrowfully, that he was unworthy of that love?

Cecil Bradley, too, in her long rich robe of palest pink, smothered in costliest lace, with diamonds glittering on her throat and arms, in her fair hair, was restless and ill at ease. She had detected the strange significance in Bell's voice as she addressed Fulton Leclerc, and she had jealously resented it, although she could not fathom its real cause; and her jealousy was intensified by the sense of inferority she could not help feeling beside this brilliant, beautiful creature, before whom far handsomer women than the poor young heiress sank into significance.

When compared with the fairy eloquence of Bell's attire, Miss Bradley's gown seemed overtrimmed almost to vulgarity; beside Bell's queenly grace her slight form looked insignificant, her pale face and fair hair, which were not entirely devoid of attraction, paled into plainess beside Miss Hamilton's beauty, and the heiress had too little confidence in herself not to perceive that it was so.

Therefore she stood, ill at ease, vexed and unhappy, answering Geoffrey at random, and catching a word now and again of what was passing between Fulton Leclerc and Miss Hamilton.

Whatever Leclerc felt just then, he had sufficient self-control and composure to act his part well, and not even a keen observer could have detected any trepidation in his manner, while Bell herself, excited, eager, almost exultant in this new thought of vengeance which had come to her was looking brilliantly beautiful.

The shimmering folds of her white gown fell around her in those long graceful folds which artists love to paint: she held her proud little head like a queen; the diamonds about her throat caught and reflected back every gleam of light; the sweet, dark eyes shone under the long dark lashes; the great boquet gave forth its fragrance to the night air. She looked like a young queen addressing one her ladies-in-waiting when she turned slowly to Miss Bradley.

"Had you ever a sister, Miss Bradley?" she asked. "Or are you that fortunate, or unfortunate, individual, an only child?"

"I never had a sister," Miss Bradley answered, looking surprised.

"I had!" Bell said gently. "If you will let me, I should like to tell you her story. May I come and see you to-morrow afternoon?"

Startled and confused Miss Bradley answered in the affirmative, adding a few murmured words expressive of her pleasure at the proposal; and the fear in Fulton Leclerc's eyes deepened, although he still bore himself proudly and composedly.

The dance music had died away again, the polka was at end, the gardens were full of slowly moving figures inhaling the pure, sweet air.

"Let me take you back to Aunt Margaret, Cecil," Leclerc said suddenly. "Our waltz will begin in a few minutes, Miss Hamilton; may I return here for you?"

"I will wait for you here," she replied calmly, and as they moved away her eyes followed them slowly and lingeringly.

"Do you think he loves her?" she asked gravely, turning to Geoffrey, who shrugged his shoulders, too much embarrassed by the question to answer it promptly.

"And she,—do you think she loves him?" Bell asked in a low voice.

"There can be no doubt about that," he answered readily. "She might have married anyone almost!"

"Ah!" Bell said slowly, and the color left her cheeks and lips, and her head sank a little.

She did not speak again until the opening chords of the waltz music reached them and she saw Fulton Leclerc coming quickly towards them down the lighted alley. She lifted her head then, and Geoffrey heard her quickened, uneven breathings and saw the sudden light in her dark eyes.

"Go now," she said hurriedly, and he turned to her quickly.

"I may come to you again?" he said, in a low, husky voice. "Are you banishing me from your presence? I may come to you when this waltz is over?"

"Yes," she answered faintly, "I shall leave then; but go now!"

She was so pale that he hesitated to leave her, but she turned from him with an impatient gesture of imperative dismissal, and as he reluctantly left her side Fulton Leclerc approached her, and the next moment they were alone together in the softly lighted, fragrant garden.

And while the man's heart beat quickly in the strange uncertainty of what the next hour would bring him, the woman was saying in the inmost depths of hers,—

"Such mercy as you gave *her*, I will give you—no other!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NOMADS OF RUSSIA.—Vegetarianism cannot be said to have made much headway among the nomads, whether in Siberia or in Turkistan. Deprived for so many months of the year by snow of any thing green, when the Siberians kill a reindeer they carefully empty its stomach of the undigested moss the animal has eaten, and serve that up as a delicacy; but in winter they get very little vegetable food beside. Even the nomads of the Steppe, what flour food they eat is taken chiefly in the form of gruel.

The Kirgis of the Steppe, live in the summer almost entirely on milk, variously prepared, while the rich eat mutton as their staple food, with the addition of beef and occasionally camel's flesh. In the north the Yakutes are fond of horse flesh. A Yakute bride on her wedding day sets before her lord and master as the greatest of delicacies horse-flesh sausages, with a boiled horse's head, of which the brains are the most dainty morsel. The quantity, too, of horse flesh they eat is appalling. Their adage says that "to eat much meat and grow fat upon it is the highest destiny of man." It use to be said that four Yakutes would eat a horse.

The Gilyaks exist on a very different kind of food, for they are almost fish-eaters, salmon being their principle diet. These fish come up the Amur in such numbers that they can be tossed out with a pitchfork. Even the dogs go in the stream and catch for themselves, and salmon, such as the finest seen in America, can be purchased in season among the Gilyaks for a penny each. The fish, cut up and dried, without further cooking, are eaten, a piece per day serving either the Gilyak or for one of his dogs.

"GETTING INTO A SCRAPE."—Every one is familiar with the expression to get into a scrape," and there are exceedingly few persons without practical experience of how easily the operation is performed. The origin of the expression is not so well known, and ordinary sources of information are silent on the subject. The phrase is said to have had its origin in Cambridgeshire, where the deep holes torn up by deer in the mating season were locally called "scrapes." To tumble into one of these often resulted in a broken leg, and ultimately, any man who found himself in an unpleasant position from which extrication was difficult was said "to have got into a scrape." The expression soon spread beyond the limits of the county in which it was first used; but by the time it was adopted into the language its origin was forgotten.

A modest person seldom fails to gain the good-will of those he converses with, because nobody envies a man who does not appear to be pleased with himself.

Bric-a-Brac.

PHYSICAL BEAUTY.—A modern scientist has discovered that mental activity enhances physical beauty, thus controverting an old theory. He says: "A handsome man, or woman either, who does nothing, but lives well or self-indulgently, grows flabby, and all the fine lines of the features are lost; but the hard thinker has an admirable sculptor always at work keeping his fine lines in repair, and constantly going over his face to improve the original design."

MEAT AND POISON.—Poison for some animals is food for others. Hogs can eat henbane or hyoscyamus, which is fatal to dogs and most other animals. Dogs and horses are not easily poisoned with arsenic. Goats eat water hemlock with impunity; pheasants, stramonium; rabbits, belladona; and morphia is said to be innocuous to pigeons. There is some truth in the old saying that "what is one man's meat is another man's poison." This is due to habits and idiosyncrasies."

HUMMING-BIRDS.—A favorite sport in Brazil and the West Indies consists in hunting humming-birds. The natives arm themselves with blow-guns made of reed, perhaps only fourteen or fifteen inches long and take pellets of cotton wool; with these they aim and so stun the little creatures that they fall an easy prey to their pursuers and their beautiful plumage uninjured. Travelers in countries where the humming-birds abound form themselves into parties for this sport, and use common salt as shot.

THE CAT.—That the Welsh had a high sense of the utility of the cat is evident from a law passed by Howel Ida, or Howel the Good, who died in the year 948. The price of a kitten before it could see was to be a penny; till it caught a mouse, two pence—a large price, if we consider the value of specie at that time. If any one stole or killed the cat that guarded the Prince's granary, he was to forfeit a milch ewe, its fleece and lamb; or as much wheat as, when poured on the cat suspended by its tail, the head touching the floor, would form a heap high enough to cover the tip of the tail.

"THE WREN'S REQUIEM."—A strange incident was recently observed in the southern part of Illinois. One spring morning two curious festoons were observed hanging from a window-sill, and apparently in motion. Closer observation showed that they were two semi-circles composed of from twenty to thirty wrens clinging together by foot and wing. They so remained for a moment or two, twittering mournfully, as though singing a dirge. And so it seemed they had been, for when they flew away a dead wren was found directly under the window from which the festoons had hung. It is said that this funeral service or "wren's requiem," as it is called, is not uncommon, though rarely seen.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S LAST REQUEST.—Anaxagoras was a famous Greek philosopher. He taught in Athens for many years, having among his pupils Socrates and others who afterwards became even more renowned than their master. But fault being at last found with his teachings, he was condemned to death—the sentence, however, was changed to perpetual exile. He retired to Lampsacus on the Hellespont (Dardanelles), where he died in 428 B.C., in his seventy-third year. The old man used to say proudly, "It is not I who have lost the Athenians, but the Athenians who have lost me." When he was dying the chief man of the town wished to know what funeral honors he desired. The philosopher finely answered: "Give the boys a holiday." For several centuries the day of his death was thus signalized in the schools of Lampsacus.

THE WORLD.—A French author, Chevreau, begins his history of the world in these words: "Several learned men have examined in what season God created the world, though there could hardly be any season then, since there was no sun, no moon, no stars. But as the world must have been created in one of the four seasons, this question has exercised the talents of the most curious, and opinions are various. Some say it was in the month of *Nisan*, that is, in the spring; others maintain that it was in the month of *Tisri*, which begins the civil year of the Jews, and that it was on the sixth day of this month, which answers to our September, that Adam and Eve were created, and that it was on a Friday, a little after four o'clock in the afternoon." This is according to the Rabbinical notion of the eve of the Sabbath.

OLD MEMORIES.

BY E. L.

With something of sadness that is less than grief, I raise
The cover of this oaken box I closed in other days.
So long ago I locked it that the key turns stiffly now,
And the withered hand is trembling; there are furrows on my brow.

True love, I thought, and loyalty lay stricken down and dead.
And what were these poor emblems when the soul they held had fled?
But, all unknown, a lingering hope within me surely lay,
Else why should I but hide the things I might have cast away?

Some heated words were said, no more; but words in wrath that fall
May banish what our blinding tears and breaking hearts recall
As visions only of the past; the bridgeless gulf between,
But shows us, to augment our grief, the joys, "that might have been."

A pile of letters! One, his last forlorn farewell, still mocks
My heart. I turn the key, to look no more upon the box!
But surely I shall be forgiven if, in the land of rest,
Among the treasures stored for me I hold my love the best.

From Out the Storm.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DICK'S SWEETHEART," ETC.

CHAPTER XL.

HE said very gently to Cicely that Marvel was right, that no doubt the presence of any stranger beyond her physicians and her servants would distress Mrs. Scarlett in her present low condition—that he sympathized too with Marvel's desire to attend upon her.

Doctor Bland had told him that Marvel's voice alone soothed her; and he could well believe that.

She, Marvel, as Cicely no doubt had noted, had a voice wonderfully low and sweet, an excellent thing in woman!

But to himself he said he would combat this determination of his wife's to avoid him. He would see her at all risks, and compel her to look into his eyes and read there the love for her that filled him.

For this purpose he waited, watching the corridor that led from her own chamber to the sick-room; and at last one night, when day was dead and all the lamps made bright the winding passages and stairs, he met her face to face close to her own door.

* * * * * *

It was the first time Wriothesley and his wife had been face to face in tete-a-tete since the miserable hour when she had been declared that most mournful of all things, one basely born.

The hot blood mounted to her cheeks, and she stepped back quickly, as though she would have retreated into the doorway behind her.

But he caught her hand and held her fast.

"What is the meaning of it?" he said. "Why do you avoid me like this? There is a great deal of folly in it all, is there not?"

He held her hand more closely, and tried to draw her to him; but she resisted passionately.

"Do not!" she cried. "Ah, let me go! It is such pain to see you, such a humiliation! If you only understood, you would not try to keep me."

"It is because I understand that I do keep you. Marvel, is your own grief the only thing that touches you? Am I nothing? Can I not feel too?"

She shrank from him.

"Do you think I don't know it?" she said. "Bad as it is for me, how far, far worse it must be for you! And now it is hopeless! Oh, if at that time on the yacht when I found out that you loved her—if I had only had the courage to drown myself then, how well it would have been! But even now I cannot, I haven't the strength of mind, I am afraid; and afterwards, that would be so terrible!"

"What are you saying?" cried he angrily. "Are you out of your mind that you say such wicked things? Good heavens, what a fool a child like you can be! And this great misfortune of yours, what does it come to? Why, nothing! Things are very much as they were a week ago; we anticipated always what we know now; and, for my part, I care not one jot."

"Is that true?"

Her melancholy eyes sought his and seemed to burn into them.

"Do not lie to me," she said.

"My dear girl," said Wriothesley, with very great tenderness, "why should I do that? I have lied to no man ever, why should I lie to you? The fact is, you have dwelt so long in the unhealthy atmosphere of that sick-room that you are growing morbid. Give yourself some relaxation. You want air and the warm sunshine to give a wholesome color to your thoughts."

"That sounds so easy!" she said, with a little mournful smile. "You do not understand—how could you? You would help me, I know," with a swift warm glance at him; "do it then. Forget me—cease to let the remembrance of me trouble you, blot me out of your life in so far as you can."

"I shall not do that, certainly," said he cheerfully. "You are part of my life, and as such I shall hold you. We are bound to each other, you and I, by all the laws of man and God; and I shall not be the one to sever the link. You distrust, you spurn me; but I will wait. Time, I believe, will help me."

"Time! Ah, that is what I fear," said she, with a shudder, "the long, long loveless years before me! And I am so young, so terribly young! All my life lies before me, and in that there is no hope—none. Death comes to the happy, the well-beloved—it will not come to me!"

"You are well-beloved if you would only know it," he said, with emotion.

"Yes! There is Cicely, and——" She paused.

The vision of Savage rose up before him as he had last seen him, a man impassioned, half desperate with a love he hardly dared reveal.

"You still think of him," he said very coldly.

"I think always of the very few who really love me. Are you angry about that?"—simply. "Do not be; I felt no love for him ever!"

It was impossible to disbelieve her. She turned to him feverishly.

"I have forgotten him—all—everything," she said impetuously. "There is but one thing that I dream of day and night; I cannot sleep, I cannot eat because of it. Oh"—with a passion of despair—"I cannot bear it!"

"Bear what?" asked he, made anxious by her manner.

She paused, and then came nearer to him on tip-toe, as though fearing she might be heard.

"That she should be my mother!" she said at last in a panting whisper. "She, of all others! Oh, it is horrible that she should be my mother—so! It is killing me! If I could only wake up and find it all a hideous nightmare—if I could blot out all those past terrible days, and feel again the blessed uncertainty about my history that I once so madly fought against—how happy I should deem myself! But I cannot!" with a burst of misery. "It is all true, true, true!"

"Marvel, have courage! Even if it be so——"

"Always, it seems to me, I feel I knew it, but only as a child might who could not reason. Oh to be dead!" said she, in a cold still way that frightened him.

"I tell you," said he angrily, "that you stay too long in that close sick-room. It depresses you, and, with all the other ills you have to bear, is more than you have strength for. If I could, I would forbid you to enter that woman's room again; but, though I am your husband, I know you will not submit to me in even the smallest matter; still, for the sake of old times——"

"Don't"—she put up her hands to her head and pushed back her hair in a little distracted fashion—"don't speak like that! If I could only undo my wretched marriage, if I could only feel once more that you were not bound to me, that you were not my husband!"

He bit his lip, and a frown settled on his brow; with gloomy eyes he regarded her.

"You may not think it," he said at last, "but, pardon me for saying it, you are uncommonly rude."

"I am not, and you know it. I am only miserable," protested she, great tears standing in her eyes.

"You make yourself so. This—this unfortunate story that was so remorselessly made known to you is a secret between me and you. Why should it not remain so? You have not told Cicely?"

His gaze was anxious as he asked her this, and she saw it, and told herself he feared the world's comments on the woman who bore his name—on the luckless creature whose history, if once known, would bring down upon her the scorn and contempt of all those amongst whom she now moved as a young and radiant queen. The thought was agony to her.

"Do not fear; I have told no one," she said coldly; and then, holding out her hand to him—"Good-night."

He bent over it and kissed it.

"You will not promise me, then, to go to your own room to-night—to cease for a few hours from your attendance in that enervating atmosphere?"

"I cannot. My duty lies there," she said, coldly still.

He watched her as she moved away from him up the lighted corridor. The step that once was light and buoyant as a young fawn's was now slow and spiritless; her head had taken a little dejected bend.

She went heavily, as one oppressed with a grief that knew no assuagement. She puzzled him almost as much as she distressed him.

What if there was yet another and a worse sorrow gnawing at her heart? If it were only the misfortune of her birth, he thought he should be able to comfort and sustain her.

What if she did in reality lament her marriage with him, not because of the shame attached to her and that prompted her to fly from all men and bury her face out of sight, but because she was remembering the words and looks of another—of Nigel Savage?

He drew a sharp breath and threw up his head as this suspicion crossed his mind. Then he flung it from him with a passionate denial of the truth of it, and turned and went away.

Meantime Marvel, sitting by the sick-bed, was wearily recalling the anxious look upon his face and torturing herself with the belief that already the horror, the fear of discovery had entered into him—already he was beginning to learn that his life was spoiled: and, that lesson was learned, with what regard would he look on her, the despoiler?

And yet in all these thoughts she wronged him. The anxiety he had shown and felt had been for her alone.

Naturally enough, there were moments when his pride shrank from the cruel fact that his wife—she who had taken a place beside all the great and stainless names that had made up the lengthy roll of his ancestry—should stand beneath a shameful cloud; but all his sympathy, his love was with her, and it was to shield her from cruel comment, from the bitter stings and wounds of the world, that he had enjoined on her a necessity for secrecy.

All through the lonely silent watches of the night she sat there brooding beside the half-dead woman, ministering to her now and then, but always with her mind embittered, despairing.

Once or twice the nurse expostulated with her, entreating her even to lie down upon the couch at the end of the room; but Marvel had refused, and sat there speechless, wakeful, with pale set face and haggard eyes.

Now and then a moan came from the bed, and then she would rise and bend over the sick woman, and with gentle arms raise her, pressing the pillows into such shape as seemed best to suit her.

Very seldom as she did this did she glance at her, some strong repulsion preventing her; but once or twice, when compelled to look, she met the strange piercing eyes of Mrs. Scarlett fixed on her.

"Is there anything you want?" she would say then, kindly if coldly; and the answer was always the same—"Nothing."

Yet, if Marvel stirred from the bedside, she would instantly grow restless, and the moans grew louder, and the poor tired head would move ceaselessly from side to side with a terrible impatience, and the face change from a deathlike calm to a miserable fretfulness, a face lovely still, in spite of all the anguish and the strange sleeplessness that not all the doctors' skill could combat.

Great hollows now lay beneath the wonderful eyes, the lovely cruel lips were bloodless, the soft luxuriant hair was gone; but the beauty that had lured many men could not even by these means be altogether killed, and the wreck that lay upon the pillows—silent, motionless—was yet a beautiful one.

At last the day broke. Marvel stood up and drew aside the curtains, and gazed out upon the slow unwilling dawning of this wild March morning.

She opened the window softly and leaned out; from the south there came to her a refreshing breeze, a breath from the sweetly-smelling wind-blown fields.

It was a heavenly breath, and she sighed deeply, as if to drink it in. Her sad heart was comforted by it for the moment, and her dreamy sensitive nature revived beneath its influence.

The spring—"the winter's overthrow"—was slowly but surely "coming up this way" and there was a sense of life—young, fresh, vigorous—in all the air.

Yet, even as she drew in the sweet refreshing draught, grief lay in her heart; she could not shake it from her.

The humiliation, the sense of being not as others are, weighed her down. Of all lives it seemed to her that hers was the saddest.

A slight sound from the bed startled her. She closed the window swiftly but very noiselessly, and went back to her post.

She leaned over the invalid, and raised her head as usual, shaking up the pillows and then laying her tenderly down on them.

But, when, having done this, she would have gone again, Mrs. Scarlett caught her gown and by a feeble hand detained her.

"What is it?" asked Marvel, compelling herself to look at her, though a strong shudder shook her as she did so.

She might be—nay, she was—her mother, but it was too late for love of any kind to blossom for her in her breast. "Can I do anything for you?"

"Nearer!" breathed the sick woman very faintly.

Marvel bent over her until her face almost touched that of the dying woman.

"There is something I must say to you."

The words came faintly, with a terrible effort, from between the pale, parched lips.

"When you are stronger—better," urged Marvel.

She shrank with a sick loathing from the thought of discussion of any kind—of confidences or regrets, or sick-bed repentance about the terrible story that had ruined her life.

"No; there is no time. I must speak now or never. Nearer—nearer still! I want to tell you"—raising her eyes, which burned like living coals in her wan face, to Marvel's—"that I lied to you. There was a marriage! I lied about it to revenge myself upon him, Wriothesley. But now, with death staring me in the face, I—I haven't the courage to—— Yes, we were married, secretly but surely. There is no doubt——"

She broke off exhausted.

"Is this the truth?" asked Marvel.

Her face had grown colorless, her voice was cold and stern; she did not believe this last statement—she knew that she did not dare believe it.

Were she to do so, only to find herself deceived, she felt that it would kill her. No, there was no truth in it. Such joy, such an almost terrible relief could not be for her.

"The truth—yes. Will you not believe? Why should I say this now?"

"The proofs!" said Marvel, in a strange, frozen tone.

She would compel her to end this cruel farce. The feeble hands made a movement towards her pillows.

"Underneath," she whispered faintly.

Marvel, almost as if in a dream, passed her hand under the pillows and drew out a tiny bunch of keys. In one of her calmer moments Mrs. Scarlett had asked for them, and had placed them herself beneath her head; now she had not strength to draw them out again.

"My dressing-case," she said, pointing out one of the keys—"the second tray."

Marvel crossed the room mechanically, opened the dressing-case, and lifted the tray she had named. Some papers folded in it met her eyes; she took them out and approached the bed. Her heart was beating now to suffocation.

"Open—read!" said the dying woman. "It is my marriage certificate, and the certificate of your birth. Keep them; if I have injured you living, you will remember when I am gone that I served you dying. Go—take them to him."

Marvel had fallen on her knees beside the bed. She was trembling violently when presently a cold beautiful hand stole towards her and touched her.

She caught it and drew it beneath her bent head, and pressed her lips to it in a passion of gratitude.

She felt faint, uncertain, frightened; but above and through all she was conscious of a great and glorious freedom, a breaking of the bonds that had chained her to the earth and turned the very light of day into a sullen gloom.

To go to him, to tell him, that was her first thought. Through the tumult of her conflicting emotions the slow broken voice came to her as if it were the touch of sorrow that ever accompanies our joy.

"You said it once—that strange word—to me. It killed me, I think. Yet I would hear it again."

She spoke with difficulty and very indistinctly, but Marvel understood.

"Mother!" she whispered, and pressed the hand she held, and, stooping forward, kissed the pale mouth.

She felt that the kiss was returned, and could see that an expression of rest, of peace fell on the beautiful face.

She rose to her feet and bent more closely over her. Mrs. Scarlett had evidently sunk into a calm sleep, worn out, as Marvel thought, by the excitement of the moment. She summoned the nurse hurriedly.

"Is she sleeping? Will it be safe to leave her for a little while?" she asked eagerly. "If you think she will wake soon, I would rather stay; but, if not——"

She paused for an answer. The woman was looking at the senseless face; she knew the dread sign that lay upon it—the last seal of all.

"She will not wake soon, my lady; you safely leave her for a while," she said, knowing that her patient would never wake again from the exhausted swoon into which she had fallen; but she had been given strict orders by Wriothesley and the doctors to get Lady Wriothesley out of the way by any means in her power before the last dread summons came, and she was glad of this chance that came to her.

"Call me if you see any change," said Marvel, lingering still, though in some haste to be gone.

She had the papers clasped to her bosom, and, with one last glance at the sleeping face, she left the room, and sped down the corridor to Wriothesley's apartments.

It was still very early, and only a few of the servants were moving here and there through the halls and passages. As she reached her husband's room she tapped impatiently, hurriedly, upon the panel of the door.

"Who is there?" he cried, in a rather sleepy tone.

"It is I—Marvel!" she said.

She could have cried aloud to him, but she compelled herself to a calmness that almost hurt her.

"You!"

His voice sounded startled, and she could hear how he sprang out of his bed. The minutes that followed seemed to her like so many interminable hours.

"Oh, hurry, hurry!" she cried. "How long—how terribly long you are!"

He flung open the door at last, and looked at her anxiously. She was so white and was trembling so much that he went to her and placed his arm round her.

"She is dead?" he said, thinking, fearing that she had witnessed her mother's death.

"Oh, no, no! It is not that. Let me in, and I will tell you all," she said.

He drew her into the room and closed the door. With hands that shook she held out to him her precious papers.

"Oh, read—read!" she said. "Oh, Fulke, after all she was married! I am not such a disgrace to you—she was really married."

"My dear child, what is it—what has happened?" said he apprehensively.

"Don't mind me," she sobbed. "Mind nothing but that"—pointing to the papers—"and read, read! Oh, I am so happy!"

"Oh, are you?" he said, a little lamely; then, as though giving up the situation, he let her cry on contentedly, and addressed himself to an examination of the papers she had given him. His color changed as he read them. "Thank Heaven for her!"

was his first thought.

As he saw her vehement abandonment to her relief and joy he realized more thoroughly than he had ever done before the overwhelming despair that had been hers.

"Thank God, my dear!" he said simply but earnestly.

He bent over her and gravely kissed her cheek.

"I thought it must be some great misfortune that had driven you to me; I am glad to know you would come to me in your joy too."

"It was not so much that," she said, flushing faintly, "as the knowledge that it was due to you to let you hear at once that the disgrace you—you felt so heavily was no longer yours."

Some soft reproach in the tone betrayed her meaning to him.

"Did you think that it was only myself I pitied," he said—"that I did not feel for you far more deeply than for any annoyance it could cause me? Why, what a selfish fellow you must think me! Perhaps"—with a regretful remembrance of all those months in which he had virtually deserted her—"you have had reason. However, I shall not scold you to-day"—smiling—"you are too happy to heed me."

She laughed in return; he was dressed only in his shirt and trousers, but he was looking very handsome, she thought, and very friendly.

She accepted the hour as it was, though she had small dependence on the constancy of it; and, besides, how could she look on anything save with rose-hued glasses with all this wealth of new-born gladness in her heart?

"If I had known you were coming," said he, looking round at the rather disorderly room, "I should have furnished up my belongings a bit, and put my best foot foremost; but, as it is——"

"Well, certainly you are untidy!" said she, with a pretty air of contempt, giving a glance here and there to where books and papers lay upon the floor, and to where on a distant table a box of cigars were strewn about. "You want some one here to look after you more than anybody I know."

"Well, that's what I think," agreed he cordially.

He caught her hand and drew her towards him; a little soft blush rose and dyed her cheeks.

At that moment there came a sharp, hurried knocking at the door. Wriothesley opened it and one of Marvel's women, not seeing her, came in quickly and spoke to him.

"The nurse bid me come to you, my lord. Mrs. Scarlett is dead—it was quite sudden."

Wriothesley was too late in putting up a warning hand—Marvel had heard. A low, gasping cry broke from her; and, overcome by the long painful vigil of the night gone by and all the conflicting emotions that had followed so hard upon it, she sank back in a dead faint upon the ottoman behind her.

CHAPTER XLI.

MRS. SCARLETT was buried with all pomp and ceremony in the Scarlett vault somewhere in the heart of Surrey.

Marvel was too prostrated to accompany her to the tomb, though some morbid desire to show her every respect urged her to do it; and Mrs. Verulam would not permit Wriothesley to go—there had been enough gossip about her and him, she said, in the past—why revive it again?

It was only a boyish infatuation, of course, when all was told; but the world was an insatiable monster where scandal was concerned, and would be sure to say all sorts of witty and wicked things if they heard he had gone—"as chief mourner," they would have certainly called it—to her funeral.

Why should he betray a deeper interest in her than all those other thousand-and-one acquaintances who were too overburdened by the cares of society to attend to her last resting-place, the queen to whom they had paid such slavish court when she was living?

There was a sense of disgust and hatred towards the dead woman in Wriothesley's breast which would not be subdued, and that helped him to acquiesce in Mrs. Verulam's decision.

Her treatment of the poor child, who now was lying in a darkened chamber suffering horribly from nervous headache, angered him against her, and made him bitterly self-contemptuous as he remembered how for her worthless sake he had once cruelly hurt and offended the sweet nature of his wife.

When the nervous attack were itself off in due time, Marvel insisted on going into deep mourning; and then of course it was necessary to take Cicely into their confidence.

She had a theory that to be astonished at anything this age could show argued a weak intellect; but for once in her life she had to acknowledge herself as entirely and stupidly amazed on hearing of Marvel's parentage.

She was one however who at once saw the necessity of enlightening the world about it.

It was impossible that Marvel should be allowed to live forever with a stigma resting on her name, a cloud of mystery surrounding her.

Immediate steps should be taken to declare her real origin, which, if it had a rather unpleasant flavor of secrecy about it, was nevertheless honorable; it would be a nine-days' wonder—nothing more. Something else would crop up even whilst the public gaped and whispered over it—something that would be probably more piquant and would therefore obliterate it.

But where should Marvel and he go for those "nine days" That was a question that troubled Wriothesley.

It was out of the question that she should receive and be received whilst the storm burst and lasted; he would not have her subjected to unkind comment or impertinent curiosity; and good birth did not give good manners, and there were many in their own world who would be sure to insult and annoy her.

To take her away for an indefinite time abroad—anywhere out of the hurly-burly of society—was his strong desire, but how to compass it troubled him.

She had shown such a passionate determination to go nowhere with him on his first return that he hardly dared make mention of the idea again, or at least did not dare hope that a second request would receive a different answer.

And time proved his fear to be true; she shrank openly from his suggestion, and turned coldly from him when he made it, with a distressed expression in her great sorrowful eyes.

"But it is so necessary!" he urged gently, battling against the sense of angry disappointment that was filling him. "The truth must be made known for your sake; and how can you stay here to face it, to be asked questions by the many vulgar people who yet belong to our set? They will not spare you; they would spare nothing to satisfy their curiosity."

"If Cicely could come—if we might make up a party!" she said faintly.

He could see how terrible it would be to her to be alone with him. He bit his lip and looked down.

How could he argue with her—how persuade? Pride stood up in arms and forbade it.

He explained to her however that Cicely could not come—Cicely, whose hands were so full of her own affairs, whose coming marriage occupied all her time.

"Could I go to the North then," she asked timidly, "and you anywhere you will? Time would pass all the same. And, when, as you think, the world have forgotten, we could meet again."

"Oh, no, I entreat you, do not incline to that plan!" he said earnestly. "When during those first months of our married life I kept away from you, I did wrong, I did you an unspeakable injury. Let us not repeat that fault. Do not give further food for talk. It would be madness to let that word 'separation' be so much as named between us again."

She sighed wearily. It was indeed terrible to her to think of long months spent alone with him—months in which she would feel each hour of the day that he was isolating himself for her sake, that he was growing every moment more bored, more ennuye, more inclined to curse the fate that had bound him to her.

The whole thing would be an annoyance to him, and she felt that she could not endure it.

If he loved her, she could, she thought, have let him make any sacrifice for her sake; but this friendly indifference that she believed he alone felt for her would not permit of her doing so.

And yet he had already done so much for her.

He was so kind, so thoughtful—there was no one like him on earth, she thought—that she knew she would not have the courage to combat any wish of his.

"It shall be as you like," she said hopelessly.

Her tone cut him to the heart.

"Why do you speak like that?" he said very gently. "Does it make you so very miserable to think you must for a few months have my companionship only? My dear, what a sad thought that must be for both of us! We are bound together for life, and yet you shrink from a few continuous days spent together! Marvel, look at me. You have made friends of others, why not accept me as a friend too? Surely I am not beyond the pale of mere friendship in your eyes? If it were not for your own good, I should abandon the idea altogether; but you know it would not do for you to stay here just at present. You hate the idea of going anywhere with me, I know; but yet I beg you to consent to the plan for your own sake."

"If I hate it," said she tremulously, turning away her head, "surely you hate it doubly!"

"I? No, indeed. If I could be assured that you loved me"—hastily, and trying to read her averted face, "I should find my chiefest happiness in being with you forever. Surely you must know that!"

Moved by some sudden inspiration, he went to her and drew her closely to him, and, stooping, pressed his cheek gently to hers.

"Darling—darling heart," he said—"why can't we try to be better friends than we are?"

His tone was low, unsteady, but warm with the deathless breath of love.

She felt it. She turned to him and in a moment was in his arms.

"Oh, to be friends again!" she cried. She was sobbing wildly, passionately. "In the dead days the friends we were! Oh, do try to love me again!"

"My sweet heart, I love you now as I never loved you then!"

"You say it, but is it really so? Is it true? Oh, Fulke, if I thought you really loved me——"

"I do, with all my soul!"

"You are not saying it because you think it will please or comfort me?"

"My darling—no! Because it is the simple truth—because it comforts myself and you too. Say that, Marvel!"

He raised her face to his.

"Oh, if you only knew!" she said.

She clung to him with all her young strength in a very passion of happiness.

"Well, I don't know; you forget how you have starved me on such matters," said he, as glad as she was, holding her to his heart. "Tell me now. Say you love me!".

She said it very sweetly, and returned his kiss as she did so.

"And you forgive me everything?"

"If there is anything. I have forgotten. And you"—bending back from him to watch his face—"you don't really think I was in love with Nigel Savage?"

"Oh, no—not now!"—laughing.

"Or ever?"

"Or ever."

But that was not quite true.

At this propitious instant Mrs. Verulam burst into the room, evidently full of important tidings.

"See here, you two," she was beginning, when she stopped dead short. "Eh—what? Anything happened?" she asked, looking from one guilty countenance to the other.

There was a considerable pause. Marvel looked down and played nervously with her rings. Wriothesley looked decidedly awkward; at last he broke into an irresistible laugh.

"We've only been making it up," he said rather boyishly.

"And a good thing too!" cried Mrs. Verulam brightly. "But you'll have to rehearse the second edition of it somewhere else. I see Lucy's carriage coming down the avenue. She has heard all; she will have you both in to cross-examine you about Marvel's romantic story if you don't clear out without a second's delay! No, don't go into the library—she is capable of searching the house; and, as for locked doors, why, the breaking open of them would be mere child's-play to her! Be wise therefore whilst there is yet time—and there's very little of it"—craning her neck round the corner of the window—"for here she comes! Make for the orchard, children, and hide there until this danger is all past!"

There was evidently not a moment to be lost. Wriothesley threw a fur cloak over Marvel's shoulders, and Cicely pushed into her hand a little fur cap; and, thus equipped, she followed Wriothesley out through the window into the brilliant April afternoon, and together, like a pair of children, they ran hand in hand to the orchard.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SISTERS AND DAUGHTERS. — Happy Thought—a vacation!—Eva: "I suppose those extremely nice-looking young men are the students, or house surgeons, or something."

Maud: "No doubt. Do you know, Eva, I feel I should very much like to be a hospital nurse."

Eva: "How strange! Why the very same idea has just occurred to me."

In this way a prominent writer lately ridiculed the rather mixed motives which sometimes induce ladies to become nursing sisters. Anything to get out of the humdrum round of commonplace duty into a more "interesting" sphere. To be a nursing sister is considered more heroic than to be a good-natured sister, and there is nothing sensational or exciting in being a good daughter.

And yet we should never go out of our way to look for duties, but should start with what lies nearest. Try first of all, then, to be good daughters and loving sisters. Even the smallest gracious word or act, or only a smile, is by no means to be regarded as a trifle.

"May I be cut into ten thousand triangles," said a certain young lady, "if I do not know more about everything than my mother ever did!"

Other girls may not express themselves as plainly about their own superior enlightenment, but some of them believe quite as strongly that it exists. Unfilial feeling, and even insubordination, is too common amongst our girls. In this respect they are, unhappily for themselves, very unlike Mrs. Carlyle, of whom her husband thus wrote: 'Obedience to her parents, unquestioning and absolute, lay at the foundation of her life. She was accustomed to say that this habit of obedience to her parents was her salvation through life—that she owed all that was of value in her character to this habit as the foundation."

Sisters can do a great deal of good in their families by influencing their younger brothers and sisters.

The little ones are far more free in talk and manner with them than they are with older people, and so they have opportunities with them which do not belong even to their mothers. Sisters may also do much in the way of influencing their schoolboy brothers, and instilling into them reverence for womanhood.

Do not be like some, who have little time to spare for the society of their brothers, who do not care to sing or play for them, and who count the cost of every gracious word and act spent in their own homes, but who are enthusiastic, charming, and beautiful when they meet gentlemen in the festive circle.

Girls are often impatient because they cannot go out into the world and earn money; but a sister or a daughter may be as good as gold herself, and render service which no amount of gold could purchase. You have nothing to give to the family treasury in the way of money, but you can give an hour of patient care to your little baby sister who is cutting her teeth.

You can give a string and a crooked pin and good advice to the three-year-old brother who wants to play at fishing. You can do something to help Mary the old cook, or attend to the door while Ellen, the parlormaid, goes home for a few hours to see to her sick mother.

You can dress yourself so neatly, and look so bright and kind and obliging, that you will give your mother a thrill of pleasure whenever she catches sight of your young, pleasant face.

You can write a letter to your father when he is absent on business, in which you can put all the news he wants in such a frank, artless way, that he will thank his daughter in his heart.

You can give patient attention to a long tiresome story by your grandmother, though you have heard it many times before. Indeed the sphere of usefulness in one's home is unlimited. M. S.

CAN IMAGINATION KILL?

MEDICAL doctors and persons experienced in human ailments are acquainted with the important part which imagination plays in respect to the origin and cure of diseases.

Cases in which illness are originated or aggravated by the imagination are numerous; but those which have terminated fatally are comparatively rare.

At first, it is difficult to lead one's self to believe that imagination can really kill; but a brief consideration of the slight effects produced in less serious cases prepares the way for further belief. One or two instances of non-fatal cases will suffice.

Some time ago, a girl about sixteen years of age had a prescription made up at a druggist's.

The prescription was a double one—part being for internal use, and part for external application only. The usual "Poison" label was affixed to the bottle containing the lotion, and a verbal caution was also given.

The girl, having been under medical treatment for some time previous, was permitted to take and apply the medicines herself; and so careful was she, that her precautions to avoid mistakes were the subject of frequent comment and occasional banter.

One day, a male cousin, having unfortunately resolved to play her a practical joke, transposed the labels on the bottles—which in other respects were not very much unlike—soon after the girl had taken her first dose.

In an apparently careless way, her attention was directed to the bottles, and, to her horror, she discovered that she must have drunk some of the lotion.

Within half an hour she had frightened herself into the belief that she was poisoned. She complained of a burning sensation in the throat and stomach, of colic, and other symptoms of poisoning.

A little later, she was seized with an overpowering tendency to sleep. The doctor was summoned in haste. He heard the girl's story, and applied such remedies as he thought proper.

But the girl grew worse. She was sinking so rapidly, that at last the frightened and hitherto silent culprit confessed what he had done.

At first, the girl did not believe him; and it was not until the doctor had taken a large dose from the red labelled bottle that she was convinced. Then she began to recover and in a few hours the immediate effects of the practical joke had left her.

A well-authenticated case is told of a young lady who for seven years or more has been under the impression that she is paralyzed. She looks strong and healthy, but lies all day on a couch, and has to be carried about in an invalid chair.

She shrieks with pain whenever a limb is moved. Her parents have taken her to at least a dozen physicians—some of the most eminent men in London—and all agree that she is in perfect health. One of them plainly told her, after a most exhaustive examination, that she was simply wasting her parents' money, and added, that he would gladly give a hundred pounds in exchange for such a constitution as hers.

And now as to the fatal cases. Some time last summer, an inquest was held on the body of a young woman who, it was supposed, had poisoned herself.

The examination showed no poison, but the stomach contained a powder which in appearance and general character corresponded with a certain insect powder. Now, the manufacturer claims that this powder is absolutely non-poisonous, and chemists do not regard as a poison the vegetable from which this powder is prepared. Its effects were tried upon a rabbit and a dog, and although experiments on so limited a scale are by no means conclusive, still neither animal was affected by it. In the absence of evidence of other causes to account for death, the only assumption that could therefore be made was, that the woman had taken the insect powder, believing it to be poisonous, and through her own imagination caused her death.

Some years ago, Napoleon III., while Emperor of France, permitted a French physician to experiment on a convict who was sentenced to death. The condemned man was delivered to the physician, who had him strapped to a table and blindfolded, ostensibly for the purpose of being bled to death.

Near the drooping head was placed a vessel of water, which, by means of a siphon arrangement, trickled audibly into a basin below, at the same moment that a superficial scratch with a needle was made right across the culprit's neck. Perfect silence was maintained, and in six minutes the man was dead.

THE HARP OF SORROW.

BY J. M.

O! snatch the harp from Sorrow's hand,
Hope! who has been a stranger long:
O! strike it with sublime command,
And be the poet's life thy song.
Of vanished troubles sing,
Of fears for ever fled,
Of flowers that hear the voice of spring,
And burst and blossom from the dead.

Sing, heavenly Hope! and dart thine hand
O'er my frail harp, untuned so long;
That harp shall breathe, at thy command,
Immortal sweetness through thy song.
Ah! then this gloom control,
And at thy voice shall start
A new creation in my soul,
A native Eden in my heart!

The Duke of Melton.

BY VIRGINIA SANDARS.

CHAPTER I.

FEW events could have created greater consternation in the fashionable world than the startling intelligence that the Duke of Melton's yacht, with all on board, including her noble owner and his only son and heir, had perished in one of those fearful storms which occasionally, in early spring, lash the blue but treacherous Mediterranean into the wildest fury.

When the fatal news reached England, the voice of lamentation was heard in many a bereaved home.

But though universally popular, the unfortunate Duke had no near relatives to bewail his untimely end and that of the delicate son, for whose health this ill-fated expedition had been undertaken.

After the excitement caused by the Duke's tragic end had somewhat subsided, which was in about twenty-four hours, every one asked his neighbors, "Who is the heir?"

The Duke had many cousins, some in the army, some in the navy, one a bishop; but that none of these were his successor was clear from the languid interest they evinced in an event creating such commotion in the great world.

When applied to by the lawyers for information respecting the actual heir, they were personally unacquainted with him, but believed he was in Thibet or Central Africa, in search of the sources of unknown rivers or extinct tribes.

Always eccentric, he had become more so, they heard, of late years, and had given up all idea of ever returning to England.

In despair the lawyers despatched a letter to Major Selmar, now Duke of Melton, under cover to the Colonel of his late regiment, stationed in India, with whom they discovered the Major still kept up social relations.

Here, on his return from a long expedition, made in company with his friend, Captain Merrivale, Selmar received the astounding intelligence that he had become Duke of Melton.

At first he ridiculed the news, ascribing it to a hoax of his old regiment, famous for its practical jokes; but when he could no longer doubt the truth of his changed fortunes, he fell into a state of the deepest depression, and it was only through the persuasions of his friend, Oliver Merrivale, that the new Duke could be induced to make preparations for his homeward journey; and then only because Captain Merrivale was returning to England on very long leave.

Therefore the two men, who were very fast friends, were enabled to travel together.

"My dear Oliver," said the new-made Duke in melancholy accents, "unless you were accompanying me I should never have courage to face England. It is a hard case that a man should become a Duke whether he likes it or not."

"Pooh! pooh! my dear fellow," replied his friend, "you will sing to a very different tune by-and-by. At present you are decidedly nipped. I wished I was standing in your shoes. By Jove! wouldn't I have a fine time of it."

"I am sure I wish you were in my position. I declare I feel exactly as though I was going to attend my own funeral."

"And so require me as chief mourner, Sel —— I beg your pardon, Duke."

"Oh! please call me Selmar still, and then I shall not feel as if my old self was quite so dead. And this is no laughing matter. Remember, I don't know a soul in England. That unfortunate affair which drove me from it has left me perfectly friendless in my native country. I have no near relatives, except a blind uncle. I can't even boast of having a lawyer, a person most people seem to have some pride in alluding to."

"Ah! ah! old fellow, he won't be long in offering his services; and as to friends—as soon as you shine on the world in the halo of your prosperity, like mushrooms they will spring up in a single night. Then think of the girls! How they will smile upon you. Why, you can throw the handkerchief to whom you choose."

"Ah! if she had only proved faithful. I could now give her everything the heart of woman could desire."

Here Selmar heaved a tremendous sigh to a completely extinct sentiment.

"And much she would have merited such good fortune! Out on such a sordid she, say I," exclaimed Oliver indignantly.

"Well, I shall never marry now," replied his friend gloomily.

"May I inquire why you are vowed to celibacy? for I have too much respect for your good sense to credit the idea of your heart being eternally blighted," drily responded the other.

"Perhaps you are right," Selmar smiled; "but still I have a prejudice in favor of being married for myself rather than for what I represent. Women are so terribly mercenary. I have neither your good looks nor fascination, Oliver."

"Pooh! pooh! For a Duke you are an Adonis, a fact of which the fair sex will soon convince you, my dear fellow."

"I am glad you think so. But all this is a closed chapter in my life. What I now bemoan is the upsetting of all my plans of life by these most undesired strawberry leaves."

"Plan of life—bah!" contemptuously exclaimed Oliver; "what plan of life have you ever developed except that of the Wandering Jew? And I tell you frankly, Selmar, I am sick of the Jew life which I have hitherto shared with you. Buried cities, extinct tribes, cannibals and war paint, slaying of beasts—all these excitements have wholly ceased to have any attractions for me, and I have a fresh plan of of life, rising in pleasing contrast to the past, namely, to sell out, find some sweet girl to woo—eventually to wed—a houri with blue eyes and golden hair, for I now loathe the very sight of dark women. And my old aunt promises to leave me her whole fortune if I will only return to England and help to take care of her and her cats."

"In the fulfilment of which good intention I wish you all luck, Oliver, for as I am forced to remain in England, I shall be very glad to keep the only friend I have there also, and to see you steady down as a married man."

Here, utterly prostrated by the overpowering heat of the Red Sea, through which their ship was sullenly ploughing her way, the two men sank into dreamy silence, suddenly interrupted by the Duke saying abruptly:

"Oliver, I wish you would change places with me for a space."

"With all the pleasure in life, my dear fellow. I fancy you do catch a little more breeze where I am. Pooh! how hot it is. I'm a Dutchman if I ever go through this purgatory again."

Captain Merrivale rose as he spoke, yawning lazily, stretching his magnificent and slenderly-attired figure with weary indolence.

"No, no: stay where you are," laughed Selmar. "Get all the benefit you can from your ideal breeze; there's a great deal in imagination. And I allude to a much more important change. You assert you would like to stand in my shoes. Supposing you make the trial for a few weeks—say till Parliament meets—and give me the benefit (by assuming your name) of ascertaining my true value in that new world into which, nolens volens, I am constrained to launch myself?"

"So Quixotic and hopelessly impossible an idea could only have originated in your eccentric brain, Selmar. And as you don't intend to go in for matrimony, why on earth should you care what the world thinks of you? Whatever it thinks, rest assured you will, as Duke of Melton, equally receive its adulation and worship."

"Exactly what I fear. And therefore, if you fall in with my sudden inspiration, I get a chance of coming across some fair girl who may love me for myself—find a wife who marries the man as well as the Duke."

"So your broken heart is really mended, Selmar, after all?" laughingly rejoined Merrivale.

"Completely, my dear fellow. But I have a shrinking dread of being again deceived. And I have thought out a plan, which will at first, I have no doubt, appear absurd to you. Yet nothing is easier than for us to assume each other's characters for a short time, as at the family place whither I am bound not a soul knows either of us."

"Impracticable," replied Oliver dubiously. "Yet," he continued reflectively, "even for a few weeks it would be a pleasant novelty to bask in the sunshine of your prosperity. But mind, I expect all its emoluments. No empty dukedoms for me. On this point our understanding must be clear."

"Certainly. And during your regency you can settle with all your creditors in full. And they are not a few, I fancy."

"Then, by Jove! I accept," cried Oliver joyfully. "And really you have so often aided me to escape the chains of matrimony that, upon my word, as you desire it, it becomes a positive duty on my part to help you into its fetters. Hurrah! I am now a Duke, I will thank you to remember."

When Major Selmar had, some twelve years previously, quitted England it was with the firm determination of never returning.

Ruined in fortune by his father in speculations closely treading on dishonor, the woman he loved, when fickle Fortune had deserted him, followed in her wake, and Selmar arrived in India with as he deemed a broken heart—a figment in which he indulged long after contempt had cured him of every vestige of soft feeling for his faithless love.

But though his heart's wound soon healed, the blow which had struck at his honor through a father's disgrace rankled long and intensely, and it was with feelings of deepest gratitude that he had accepted from the late Duke a commission in a regiment bound for foreign service.

Selmar was popular in his regiment, for he was an honorable and brave man, though decidedly eccentric, and perhaps, from constant brooding over his past, a little selfish.

In outward appearance he was not without some personal advantages.

His eyes were pleasant, his mouth good, especially when brightened by one of his rare smiles, his nose—well, his nose was nothing very remarkable for an ordinary mortal, but for a Duke it was perfect.

Then his figure, though not cast in such perfect proportions as Captain Merrivale's, denoted greater athletic strength, and he could boast of having slain more lions and tigers than any man in India.

Indeed, the friendship between Selmar and Oliver had originated in Selmar having rescued the latter, at risk of his own life, from a tiger's claws.

And their friendship had been still further cemented by the many tender scrapes out of which the susceptible captain had been dragged by his friend.

Pre-eminently handsome and fascinating, Oliver, who was a desperate flirt, had the unhappy knack of inspiring the temporary object of his affections with a much more enduring passion than his own ever proved to be.

But having given out that he was too poor to indulge in the expensive luxury of a wife, he considered that if some fair one gave too much heed to his honeyed words, this warning exonerated him of all blame.

About the gallant captain's looks there could be no two opinions.

He had the face and figure of an Apollo, a boyish manner, soft laugh, and oh! such dangerous "heart-devouring" eyes, as one of his victims observed when discussing with a fellow-sufferer the too seductive Oliver's perfections.

Arrived at Melton Abbey, and having taken agent and lawyer into their confidence, the two friends quietly dropped into their assumed positions, Oliver receiving with laughing impudent grace the ovation prepared for the Duke, his gay address and handsome person winning golden opinions from all, while the real potentate, sunk into insignificance, was privately occupied with his agent in the serious details of business incident to his position.

Though it was known no entertainments would take place at the Abbey until after Christmas, owing to the late Duke's tragic end, the Abbey was soon assailed by cards and visitors in shoals.

Notably amongst the former were to be seen those of the Dowager Viscountess Lopore and her three daughters, the Hon. Iris, Daphne, and Hyacinth Parkhurst, the acknowledged beauties of the county, popular, undeniably lovely and amiable, and with well-earned reputations of being outrageous flirts.

Lady Lodore was a widow, but slenderly dowered.

When she could let her pretty country residence she migrated to London, in the maternal hope of there mating her handsome daughters.

But whether she played her cards too openly, or the young ladies flirted too audaciously, thereby alarming those they most wished to attract, the result was the same—the Misses Parkhurst still retained their maiden names.

Not that they did not wish to change them, for they were all equally weary of poverty, humiliating economies and self-made finery.

But of what use marrying, they asked, if drudgery and lack of all the æsthetic graces of life were still to be their portion, accompanied perhaps by loss of looks and abstinence from flirtation?

Indeed, Hyacinth, the youngest and far the most lovely of the sisters, when one day engaged in the arduous task of packing (which she detested), had declared, as she struggled with a refractory trunk, which refused to close, though both her well-developed sisters were sitting on it—

"That if the oldest and ugliest man in the realm were to propose to her when thus engaged, she would unhesitatingly accept him—if only he were rich."

Yet, notwithstanding this bold assertion, the sisters had entered into a solemn compact that, though they would never marry a poor man, neither would they accept any one they could not love.

And only a short time previous to the Duke's arrival, Hyacinth had refused the richest parti in the county, Sir Richard Bankwell, because he did not fulfil the requirements her heart demanded.

"You are quite right, darling," said Iris, who adored her youngest sister. "You are only twenty, the most beautiful of us all, and must give yourself another chance. It is a pity Sir Richard did not fix his affections upon me. Awful thought, I am thirty to-day, and getting very tired of boys."

It was at this critical juncture of the Misses Parkhursts' destinies that the Duke appeared on the tapis, brightening into more solid hope their hitherto fruitless matrimonial speculations.

Great was the excitement at the Dower House. Discreet inquiries were made, peerages were closely studied to discover his age.

He was thirty-eight, consequently suitable for any of the sisters. Having freely discussed the matter—amiable to each other even in the important matter of lovers—they agreed that from the moment the Duke displayed a decided preference for one of their number the others would retire into the background.

The great thing for them was to be first in the field, and thus prevent this great prize from straying to other ground. If the Duke hunted they were sure of success, for in the hunting field the sisters were without a rival.

Therefore it was with infinite gratification that the Misses Parkhurst listened with more than ordinary attention as the care-worn viscountess said one morning at breakfast, with ill-concealed agitation, "Iris, have you heard that the Duke invites no guests to the Abbey until after Christmas?"

"Yes, mamma, we have heard the doleful news," replied stately Iris.

"And talked of nothing else ever since; I am sick of the word 'Duke,'" said a pretty piquante brunette, whose dark hair and clear olive complexion testified to her being of different parentage to the golden-haired sisters. She was Lady Lodore's niece, temporarily staying beneath her aunt's roof.

"I am very sorry you are sick of the Duke's name, Katie, for I have invited him here," observed Lady Lodore with emphatic calm.

"You have asked him here?" exclaimed the sisters in a chorus of breathless admiration at their mother's courageous audacity.

"I have so deemed it my duty," replied the viscountess with dignity, adding carelessly, "It is only an act of simple courtesy. Being a bachelor he is naturally living in a state of the greatest discomfort, the late Duke's establishment having been dispersed."

"But has he accepted?" eagerly demanded the chorus.

"Why should he not?" grandly demanded Lady Lodore. "He has accepted my invitation, and in the most gracious manner. But there you are, as usual, all talking together. This odious habit has, I am sure, lost you many husbands."

"Well, aunty, my cousins could only marry one man—at least at a time."

The viscountess cast a severe glance at her niece, withering pretty Kate into silence, while she continued with solemn irritability:

"I am aware how little my daughters value any advice proceeding from my lips, still I trust that for once they will give heed to my counsels, and previous to the Duke's arrival, will settle amongst themselves who is to do the agreeable to him."

"Oh! we have arranged all that, mamma," said Iris, glancing with a loving smile at her blue-eyed sister Hyacinth.

"If I might be allowed an opinion," continued the dowager with increased solemnity, "I should say Daphne has the best right to be put forward on this occasion. You, Iris, have had longer opportunities. And as Hyacinth—the mother's voice was reproachfully—has seen fit to refuse the richest parti in the county——"

Here Lady Lodore suddenly broke off in her peroration, exclaiming—

"Good gracious, Daphne, there is that disfiguring spot again appeared on your nose! Why—why will it always come when I most wish you to look your best?" she cried in tones of despair.

"You had better ask my nose, mamma. I did not invite the spot," rather sullenly answered poor Daphne.

"Put a black patch on it, Daphy," said Kate laughing.

"To attract greater attention to the offending blemish," replied Daphne with a smile and quickly restored good-humor.

"Had it been anywhere else she might have put on a patch, they are very becoming," observed Lady Lodore with reflective mournfulness.

The girls all laughed merrily, and Kate in consoling accents observed—

"Don't fret, aunty, Daphne's nose will be all right before the great man arrives."

"He comes to-morrow," was the despairing answer.

"To-morrow!" exclaimed the sisters, completely taken aback.

"Hurrah! cousins, now for your feathers and war paint," cried Kate, waving a very pretty little hand in the air. "I back you, dear Cynthy," she whispered, putting her arm round Hyacinth's waist.

"Ah! Kate, it is my week for housekeeping. Fancy the toll of unusual hospitality. I almost wish he was not coming," sighed Hyacinth.

At the Abbey Oliver was beginning to chafe beneath the splendors of his borrowed plumage.

For the Duke, absorbed in business, could devote little time to his friend's amusement. Therefore it was with no small satisfaction that he hailed the opportunity of change and excitement offered by Lady Lodore's invitation.

Her note was delivered by a valet lately taken into the Duke's service but not into his confidence.

Tossing it across the table to Selmar, Oliver said, "What do you say to accepting this invitation? I hear the girls are perfectly lovely—amusing and rather fast; we might have some fun. It is confoundedly slow here, and I am heartily sick of the weight of your strawberry leaves."

Oliver yawned furiously as he slowly spoke.

"And you look forward to indulging in your favorite pastime, I perceive?" observed Selmar gravely. "I fear it is dull for you here at present. But remember, if I accept this invitation, you cannot, in your present situation, indulge in the slightest approximation to flirtation without bringing discredit on both yourself and me."

"It would certainly be rather awkward if one of these hoydens fell in love with your humble servant; I only accept, and I promise not to be too irresistible. And

who knows but that amongst those beauties you may not stumble on your future duchess?"

Selmar smiled rather contemptuously, saying:

"For your sake, and yours only I fling myself among strangers. But mind, my eyes will be ever watching you."

"As a cat watches a mouse!" laughed Oliver.

"Precisely."

A few days later the Duke and Oliver, leaving valet and luggage to follow, walked leisurely over to the Dower House after their day's shooting.

The former was in unusually bright spirits, whereas Oliver was taciturn, not to say a little sulky.

As the two men turned into Lady Lodore's well-kept approach, the cloud overhanging Oliver's brow darkened still further, and he suddenly burst out, saying:

"I wish you would release me from this ridiculous position in which you have inveigled me, Selmar. If these young ladies are as beautiful as represented, I know I can't trust myself. I know I can't."

"In other words, Oliver, you mean to say that even to oblige your best friend you are unable to abstain from your contemptible weakness for a few weeks."

The Duke spoke with withering scorn.

"Don't be hard on a fellow, Selmar. I am but flesh and blood after all. Mine is an amiable weakness. I am not made of marble, but of the most malleable clay. I am impressionable, Selmar, very. Suppose I fall in love?"

"Suppose the moon is made of green cheese," contemptuously replied the Duke.

"I only say suppose, Selmar. I wish to provide for contingencies."

"Well, if you find your heart's citadel giving tokens of weakness, raise the siege and fly temptation like a man."

"And supposing—mind, I am still only supposing—the girl falls in love with me? What then? Are we to fly together, as you so airily propose, for her to discover one has taken flight with a scoundrel instead of a Duke?"

"There's no fear of such a catastrophe where a man of honor is concerned," replied Selmar grandly. "And indeed, my dear Oliver, a little abstinence from flirtation will serve as a tonic to strengthen your character."

"I am glad you think so. But I beg you to remember that tonics are apt to increase the malady they are intended to cure, if indulged in too long. And so I trust the choice of your future duchess will not be unnecessarily prolonged."

Here a dismal and prolonged howl caused both men to equally arrest their steps and conversation.

But they quickly discovered the doleful sounds to proceed from a rabbit hole, in which a small dog was imprisoned.

Regardless of Oliver's warnings that they would be late for dinner, the Duke, devoted to animals, set to work to release the prisoner, and soon a starving little skye-terrier lay panting in his arms.

"You are in luck, Selmar," rather jealously observed Oliver. "Depend upon it, this dog is a pet of one of the Misses Parkhurst. What a glorious opening for courtship!"

In the pretty drawing-room of the Dower House, attired on this most important day in seductively becoming tea-gowns, sat Lady Lodore and the expectant duchesses, awaiting in feverish excitement the arrival of their guests.

Captain Merrivale had been but cursorily alluded to by the viscountess "as a friend staying with the Duke, and whom consequently she was forced to invite also."

It was the witching hour of five o'clock tea. The carefully shaded lamps shed a most becoming radiance over the sirens arrayed for conquest.

Stately Iris, presiding over the tea table, looked a very Juno in crimson and black lace.

Daphne, whose nose was—thanks to a little chalk, for the girls never powdered—restored to its pristine beauty, appeared a perfect harmony in azure blue and silver, while the lovely Hyacinth was a dream of beauty in virgin white.

What these perfect costumes—entirely the production of their own brains and hands—had cost the wearers in labor and thought, to say nothing of their mother's black satin, was known only to themselves.

Surely such a combination of talent and industry deserved to be crowned with success.

The time had long passed at which the visitors ought to have arrived, and a nervous silence, engendered by protracted waiting, had stolen over all the ladies. Every surmise as to the Duke's tastes and habits had been exhausted.

Of his personal advantages the young ladies were fully assured. For had they not seen him in church, and decided at once that the Adonis gracing the ducal pew could be no other than its owner? Upon his friend they bestowed no second thought, having at first sight dubbed him insignificant-looking and second-rate.

Breaking a silence which had remained undisturbed some minutes, Lady Lodore, glancing at her two younger daughters, observed plaintively:

"I do wish, girls, you would lay aside that horrible knitting."

Hyacinth and Daphne, who were both occupied with a crimson knickerbocker stocking, looked up and smiled.

"What will the Duke say if he sees you thus occupied? You have no brothers, and the very color of your wool betrays you are not employed for the poor," added the mother querulously.

"We cannot afford to lose old friends before we have made new ones, mamma," replied Hyacinth gaily. "These stockings are for Major Banger and Captain Smithers, who have so often given us a mount."

"Major Banger! Captain Smithers!" repeated Lady Lodore contemptuously. "Oh! what incorrigible flirts you are."

"So we acknowledge ourselves to be, mamma," said Hyacinth good-humoredly. "But good, honest, open flirts, who, when married, intend to entirely close the pleasant volume of flirtation, which will at first be sadly dull, I fear."

Here Hyacinth started, raising her hand to enjoin silence, while the sound of carriage wheels called all the ladies to attention, and Lady Lodore deftly seizing a stocking right and left from her refractory daughters' fingers, flung them beneath the sofa, saying angrily:

"I will be obeyed for once. Here is the Duke!"

At the same moment the door flew violently open, and Kate rushed in, her pretty face crimson with excitement, her hair in wildest disorder, and her dress and hands soiled with earth, while in breathless words she exclaimed:

"Tiger is found! But oh! he is in a rabbit hole. Please send one at once to dig him out, for I can't manage it."

Lady Lodore remained speechless from anger.

But Iris, rising from the dignified pose she had assumed in expectancy of the Duke's arrival, took poor little Kate by the shoulders and pushed her towards the door, saying authoritatively:

"For goodness sake, Kate, go and make yourself fit to be seen. Here is the Duke."

Kate shook herself free from her cousin's grasp, replying irreverently:

"Bother the Duke! Besides, it's not him; only his valet and things. And I won't go, but stay and disgrace you all, unless you promise at once to send some one to Tiger's help. What do I care for a hundred million Dukes in comparison to the dog darling mamma gave me!" sobbed Kate passionately.

But her tears were quickly arrested at the sound of a feeble little bark in the passage, and in another moment the Duke of Melton and Major Selmar were announced (for it was decided the Duke should retain his original name, as he and Oliver were distantly related, and could term themselves cousins).

As they entered, with one bound Tiger sprang from his rescuer's arms into those of the enchanted Kate, who, unmindful of all present, covered him with kisses, while Lady Lodore and her daughters came forward and greeted their guests with the easy grace of well-bred woman of the world.

"By Jove! they are divinities, and I am lost," mentally ejaculated Oliver, while aloud he gallantly observed, "I was told your daughters numbered the Graces, Lady Lodore, whom they so fitly represent, but I perceive that you have also a Hebe in your household."

He glanced at untidy Kate, who now that she held Tiger in her arms was beginning to feel rather crestfallen at her own appearance, but yet did not like to leave the room, wishing to see the fun.

"My niece, Miss Morden, Duke; hardly out of the schoolroom," said Lady Lodore, hoping this might serve as an excuse for Kate's disorderly appearance.

"Then it was not one of the Misses Parkhurst' dog which you so gallantly rescued," said Oliver, addressing his friend, with as near an approach to a wink as he dared indulge in.

"Oh! I am so much obliged to you; more than words can express, Major Selmar," said Kate, coming out of her corner and offering with a deep blush her little earth-stained hand, which the Duke took with a smile.

He had experienced some disappointment on finding it was to this pretty child, and not to one of the stately beauties that he had done good service.

But he felt fully rewarded as he looked into the depths of the liquid brown eyes raised so gratefully to his; and discovering that Kate had but lately returned from India, they soon had many topics in common, and being left quite in the cold by the other ladies, who were completely occupied with Oliver, the Duke and Kate quickly became on friendly terms.

She, with the sweet ingenuousness of extreme youth, confided to him how she had lately left home and parents because the climate of India was injuring her health, and how, to comfort her at parting, her darling mother had given her Tiger.

"And we love each other, don't we, Tiger, and talk together of mamma?" said the girl, stooping to kiss the dog on its head.

When she looked up again her eyes were full of tears, and, much touched, the Duke observed gently:

"Dogs are sometimes truer friends than human beings, Miss Morden."

Here Iris, reproaching herself for neglect of the Duke's friend, inquired if he would not have some tea, and Kate slipping out of the room, he approached the table, where Oliver, intoxicated by an English freshness of beauty to which his eyes had long been unaccustomed, was conversing with guilty brilliancy, every resolution of not flirting melting away beneath the sunny glances of the fair sisters.

Beautiful as they were, all three, he had quickly decided that Hyacinth was the most brilliant of this bright constellation.

In the meanwhile Lady Lodore was sitting on what is metaphorically termed thorns.

For, hating to bide with idle fingers, and maintaining she could even talk better when occupied, Hyacinth, regardless of her mother's convulsive looks and frowns, had extracted her work from beneath the dark depths of the sofa, and was again busily knitting.

"You can have no conception how refreshing it is to see you occupied in such homely work. In India, our ladies are so enervated by the heat, they can do nothing but read novels," said Oliver in his softest voice, watching with admiration the clinking pins moving so rapidly in Hyacinth's slender white fingers. "What fortunate brothers are yours to have such kindly workers in their sisters," he whispered insinuatingly.

"We have no brothers, Duke," replied Hyacinth demurely, glancing at her mother.

"Ah! you are even better employed? For charitable purposes, of course."

"Well, yes and no, for Captain Smithers, for whom my work is destined, is, I fear, not overburdened with this world's goods," replied Hyacinth with arch boldness.

"Happy Smithers!" whispered Oliver, inwardly wondering "who the deuce Smithers was," deciding he must be one of the innumerable adorers he had heard discussed in conjunction with the Misses Parkhurst.

But the thorns here becoming unbearable to Lady Lodore, she groaned audibly, causing Oliver to look round in astonishment, while the Duke gave a loud admonitory cough, recalling his recalcitrant friend to order, and a few minutes later the whole party retired to prepare for dinner.

"Hyacinth, you will break my heart," almost sobbed Lady Lodore, as together they mounted the stairs.

"I should be sorry to do that, dear mamma," replied the girl coaxingly. "But depend upon it, I know my own business best; and I will never sail under false colors."

So saying, she kissed her mother and ran up to her room laughing.

She thought the Duke the handsomest man she had ever seen in her life, and the most fascinating.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE HUMAN HEART.—In the human subject the average rapidity of the cardiac pulsation of an adult male is about 70 beats per minute. These beats are more frequent, as a rule, in young children and women, and there are variations within certain limits in particular persons owing to peculiarities of organization. It would not necessarily be an abnormal sign to find in some particular individuals the habitual frequency of the heart's action from 60 to 65 or 75 to 80 per minute.

As a rule the heart's action is slower and more powerful in fully developed and muscular organizations and more rapid and feebler in those of slighter form. In animals the range is from 25 to 45 in the cold-blooded and 50 upward in the warm-blooded animals, except in the case of a horse, which has a very slow heartbeat—only 40 strokes a minute.

The pulsations of men and all animals differ with the sea level also. The work of a healthy human heart has been shown to equal the feat of raising 5 tons 4 hundred weight one foot per hour, or 125 tons in 24 hours. The excess of this work under alcohol in varying quantities is often very great.

A curious calculation has been made, giving the work of the heart in mileage. Presuming that the blood was thrown out of the heart at each pulsation in the proportion of 60 strokes per minute, and at the assumed force of 9 feet, the mileage of the blood through the body might be taken at 207 yards per minute, 7 miles per hour, 163 miles per day, 61,320 miles per year, or 5,150,880 miles in a lifetime of 84 years. The number of beats of the heart in the same long life would reach the grand total of 2,869,776,000.

WHY WE PAINT TIMBER.—When water is supplied to the smooth surface of timber, a thin layer of the wood will be raised above its natural position by the expansion or swelling of the particles near the surface. In colloquial phrase, workmen say that when water is applied to a smooth board, the grain of the timber will be raised; every successive wetting will raise the grain more and more, and water will dissolve, and wash away the soluble portions with which it comes in contact. As the surface dries, the grain of the timber at the surface, having been reduced in bulk, must necessarily shrink to such an extent as to produce cracks.

Now, if a piece of oil-cloth be pasted over the surface, the timber will be kept quite dry. Consequently the grain of the wood will not be subjected to the alternate influences of wet and heat. As it is not practicable to apply oil cloth ready-made, a liquid or semi-liquid material is employed for covering the surface, which will adhere firmly, and serve the purpose of oil-cloth in excluding water that would otherwise enter to the injury of the work. Metallic substances are painted to prevent oxidation or rusting of the surface which may be exposed to moisture.

USED HER TEETH AS A WEAPON.—Mrs. Lucinda Craddock, living in Newark, N. J., was awakened at 1 P. M. one night lately, by a man climbing from a ladder into her bedroom window. The intruder extinguished the light and seized the woman, who fought with all her strength, and seizing one of her assailant's fingers between her teeth, bit him until he cried out with pain and released her.

Scientific and Useful.

CURE FOR DRINK.—Soldiers in the Russian army are said to be cured of intemperance by a curious and heroic method. The inebriate is locked up and given only food boiled in his favorite wretched spirit and water. He soon becomes horribly sick, but is kept on this diet until the very sight or scent of the spirit creates in him an inextinguishable loathing for it.

AN ELECTRIC TRAVELLING LAMP.—A late invention is a neat and portable railway reading lamp. It consists of a small glow lamp, fixed in a reflecting case, which can be held in the hand or hooked to the dress. The current is supplied to it by means of flexible conductors; and the battery or accumulator, which weighs about 1½ lbs., is contained in the traveller's bag or pocket.

CUTTING GLASS.—The process of cutting glass tubes by electricity has succeeded admirably. The tube is surrounded with fine wire, and the extremities of the latter are put in communication with a source of electricity. It is, of course, necessary that the wire should adhere closely to the glass. When a current is passed through the wire the latter becomes red hot and heats the glass beneath it, and a single drop of water deposited on the heated place will cause a clean breakage of the glass at that point. The thicker the tube the cleaner the fracture.

AN IRON-FRAMED CHAIR.—Deck or verandah chairs are now being made with light frames of japanned iron, and detachable canvas seats. The canvas is very easily removed or replaced, so that the frames of the chairs may be left in position in the garden or on deck until their owners are ready to use them. All travellers know what an important gain this will prove on board ship. The frames fold up flat, three-quarters of an inch in thickness, with or without the canvas seat; and the latter, if rolled up separately, is only an inch and a half in diameter. A canopy to guard against the sun's rays can easily be fitted to these chairs.

DYNAMITE.—Dynamite is so instantaneous in its action that a green leaf can be compressed into the hardest steel before it has time to flatten. One experiment was to place some leaves between two heavy flat pieces of iron, set them on a firm foundation and see what gun-cotton would do in forcing the iron pieces together. A charge was placed upon them by compressing the cotton into a cylindrical form about one inch thick and three or four inches in diameter, through the centre of which a hole is made for a cap of fulminate of mercury, by which the gun-cotton is exploded. The reaction was so great, from merely being exploded in the open air, that one of the iron pieces was driven down upon the other quick enough to catch an impression of the leaves before they could escape.

Farm and Garden.

THE BRUSH.—If the brush is to be used it is of more importance on the cow than on the horse, yet the former is almost entirely neglected in that respect.

THE LAWN.—The lawn that is frequently mowed will soon die out unless some fertilizer be applied. Every time the lawn-mower is used a certain proportion of the elements of the soil are removed, as it is really cropping the ground.

DISEASE.—Foul odors, drinking filthy water, and sleeping in slippery stalls, where the liquid manure adheres to the skin and udder, cause disease in cows, which is communicated to those who use the milk. Diphtheria, typhoid and scarlet fevers, and other diseases may be traced to impure milk.

MOSQUITOES.—It is claimed that the presence of the castor-oil bean plants around the house will prevent mosquitoes from becoming very numerous. As the plant makes a beautiful ornament, it would not be out of place, and might, therefore, be given a trial with advantage. It is doubtful, however, if there are any plants that will keep away the pests.

BIRDS AND CATS.—The number of birds annually destroyed by cats is enormous. It is a question whether the cats do not cause more injury by the destruction of birds than the rats they destroy. The cats seek not only the parent bird, but kill the young in their nests, on the ground and up the trees. No estimate can be made of the damage thus inflicted upon farmers by the family cats.

SELLING FOWLS.—One mistake made with selling fowls is in growing them to a large size before selling. The best weights are from three to four pounds each. The demand is greater for such weights, as many buyers have found the larger sizes more expensive. Commission merchants report that while there is, of course, a demand for choice, large fowls, yet the small ones sell more rapidly.

ITS VALUE.—The value of stable dung, must not be estimated upon actual richness in ammonia or phosphoric acid within a short period of its production, but must be calculated on its wonderful physical and chemical action on the elements of the soil and the air, and upon its merits as a vehicle or conductor into which compelling quantities of outside substances can be introduced, decomposed and rapidly made available.

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In Later Years.

It is held by some that human culture is begun, carried on and completed within that portion of life embracing childhood, youth and manhood. One-third or so of the appointed years are so apportioned out for the purposes of education, and all who pass beyond those circumscribed years in artistic or mechanical training are looked upon as quite exceptional persons.

Sometimes it is allowed that the middle period has an influence in the way of improvement, through its business, its society and its friendship, that those things solidify the character and cause it to bear fruit, but the culturing time is mainly passed over, and the chief thing is to use the training before obtained.

Beyond the middle age there is held to be only declining years, in which is lost, it is assumed, in greater or lesser degree, whatever may have been gained in the previous periods. All the fruits of the past have to be surrendered or allowed to rot upon the tree; no more strength of any kind is achieved; there is nothing to be done but to rest and be as thankful as circumstances will allow, and with such grace as can be commanded, receive from others the help that may lighten the burden while the remainder of the journey is made.

That, however, is not the ultimate necessity of advanced life. No; most assuredly there is a more exalted, a more truthful, and more noble prospect for humanity than that.

Without accepting all that has been said in adulation of old age, from the time of Cicero to the present, it may be held that the period of advancing years, as well as the earlier stages, has possibilities and opportunities of a richly luxuriant culture, for the striking examples furnished by history, in ancient and modern times alike, make it quite plain that old age need not be either destitute or useless, but, on the contrary, may be characterized by a growth and possession of all the higher excellences.

The fact of the matter is, that in advanced life culture is more easy than at any other time, for the mind is more apparent, and lightens up the outward form with a brightness never seen, except in a small degree, before.

In age the wishes and desires are educated to the level of experience, and are brought within the radius of experience and within the compass of the powers, and the strength is measured out judiciously for the work to be accomplished.

This easiness of education arises from there being a more settledness of disposition—indeed, what has been rightly styled, "repose of mind; a pure ethereal calm that knows no storm;" and thus contemplation comes to be the method of study in advancing years. The truly advancing life learns by contemplation how to think.

The longer the life, too, the more there is found to learn. In his last hours only did Newton realize how much he did not know; and even dying, to some of the wisest, has been considered only as an interregnum in the process of education, for, as one said smilingly to those who stood around his deathbed, "Well, here I am at last, like a child—going home for the holidays!"

The education which comes through contemplation with advancing years is as wide as it is deep, as profound as it is accurate, and it embraces all nature and life.

How near to nature age can sometimes approach, and how to age her secrets are revealed! How she told her inmost heart to Wordsworth, and how he interpreted her to the world.

But, of a truth, there are no such lovers of the world of nature as the aged. They love it for its own sweet sake. As the days go by they grow more and more satisfied with its simplicity, finding new lessons and new joy in the yearly renewal of life and power.

What an exalted view of life, as well as of nature, is that oftentimes obtained by the aged. The young and the middle-aged are frequently filled with discontent and rail out against life; but seldom is this the case with those who are full of years and the wisdom of age.

They have been so long with life, and it has taught and is teaching them so many lessons, that they cannot complain of it, still less can they condemn.

Of course, they know that there are difficulties, but the years clear up many of them, and there are spectres which cannot always be laid when the momentous mysteries of existence amaze the mind, but the years make them less and less formidable. All fear is lost in love.

To them the lapse of years is not all there is of life. Out of doubt and anxiety they educe the lessons of faith and hope. They take to their hearts the unalienable treasure of trust, and when the end of their years arrives they rest, with the sweet repose of a child, in the everlasting arms.

Most truly has it been said that the year round we are called upon to render certain little acts of kindness one to another. The undercurrent of little kindnesses, though but a creeping streamlet, yet incessantly flows. Although it glides in silent secrecy within the domestic walls, and along the walks of private life, and makes neither appearance nor noise in the world—yet does it prove in the end a more copious tributary to the store of human comfort and felicity than any sudden and transient flood of detached bounty, however ample, that may rush into it with a mighty sound. Let every one of us endeavor to test the truth of this. How easy the effort! How undefinable the pleasure of doing good, even on a small scale!

It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature that, when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would seem almost as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may these patient angels hover around us, watching for the spell which is so soon forgotten!

Few things appear so beautiful as a very young child in its shroud. The little innocent face looks so sublimely simple and confiding among the terrors of death. Crimeless and fearless, that little mortal passed under the shadow and explored the mystery of dissolution. There is death in its sublimest and purest image; no hatred, no hypocrisy, no suspicion, no care for the morrow, ever darkened that little one's face; death has come lovingly upon it; there is nothing cruel or harsh in its victory.

Do not be disheartened because you have failed once, twice or three times, but press onward; make up your mind to gain a certain point, and gain it. Do not stop till you see failure disappearing and success fairly in your hands. It must come, sooner or later, if you only make up your mind not to be beaten.

Among the most precious possessions of humanity are its ideals. Whatever of poverty or hardship, of sickness or sorrow, or disappointments or adversity, of failure or weakness or sin may afflict a man, he has still within him the image of something better, nobler, happier, more successful to hope for and to strive after. To this image, varying though it does with the character and personality of each individual, is society indebted for its continued progress and improvement in manifold directions.

The training of the conscience, or moral sense, is the most delicate and important of all the duties devolved upon the teachers of youth. The mere disposition to follow right and avoid wrong, however sincere and earnest it may be, is not all that is required. The reason must be brought to bear upon and direct this disposition—in other words the conscience must be taught to discriminate intelligently. The arguments must be addressed directly to the conscience itself.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immovable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Ye men of gloom and austerity, who paint the face of Infinite Benevolence with an eternal frown, read in the everlasting book, wide open to your view, the lesson it would teach. Its pictures are not in black and sombre hues, but bright and glowing tints; its music—save when ye drown it—is not in sighs and groans, but songs and cheerful sounds. Listen to the million voices in the summer air, and find one dismal as your own.

In all our efforts to subdue ignorance and vice, to aid the feeble, to raise the fallen, to restore the erring, to relieve the oppressed, we need to look far deeper than the surface facts or the actual evils we would banish. "What is the source?" should be our constant inquiry; and against that, when we have found it, should our chief efforts be directed.

What passes in the world for talent or dexterity or enterprise is often only a want of moral principle. We may succeed where others fail, not from a greater share of invention, but from not being nice in the choice of expedients.

Action and self-renunciation lead alike to happiness; for he who either acts or denies himself reaps the harvests of both virtues. Right action, undertaken heedless of consequences, is indeed renunciation.

The churchyard is the market place where all things are rated at their true value, and those who are approaching it talk of the world and its vanities with a wisdom unknown before.

He that sympathizes in all the happiness of others perhaps himself enjoys the safest happiness, and he that is warned by all the folly of others has perhaps attained the soundest wisdom.

If you want to know how mean a person can be just quit trying not to be mean for a day or two. Our capacity in this direction is very large.

He who seldom thinks of heaven is not likely to get thither; as the only way to hit the mark is to keep the eye fixed upon it.

It matters not how poor you may be, once overcome the disappointment of failure and you have attained success.

We can offer up much in the large, but to make sacrifices in little things is what we are seldom equal to.

Man would not live long in society were they not the mutual dupes of each other.

The World's Happenings.

His Holiness the Pope received during the jubilee 14,000 pairs of slippers.

Chinese nightingales are now the fashionable drawing-room birds in Europe.

The average salary of the Methodist ministers in Vermont is about $600 a year.

The largest cotton-mill in the world is in Russia. It gives employment to 7,000 hands.

A young man at Reading, Pa., is seriously ill from kissing a girl's rouge-painted cheeks.

In England a man with a wooden leg recently claimed the right to travel on a railroad at half fare.

One of the newly elected pages of the Iowa House of Representatives is a 10-year-old girl.

A vegetarian hotel is an innovation in London. There are already 30 vegetarian restaurants in that city.

According to insurance statistics more fires are extinguished by the use of pails of water than by all other means.

A Chicago newspaper makes the statement that a railroad train arrives or departs from that city every minute of the day.

A barber of Newburg, N. Y., has invented a chair which registers the number of persons who sit in it during the day.

Asbestos clothing has been used by the Paris Fire Brigade with success, and is soon to be adopted by the London firemen.

It is claimed that the deaths and wounds from railroad accidents are only about one-fourth as great in Europe as in this country.

Attempts have been made at St. Louis and Chicago to introduce the use of goats' flesh for food, but they met with complete failure.

Circus proprietors and dime museum agents may be interested in the report that a horse with a heavy moustache has been seen in New York State.

Louis Dalcourt, a Taunton, Mass., boy, aged 10, fell on a tin bean blower in such a manner that the blower penetrated the brain through the eyeball and killed him.

A Kansas schoolteacher offered a prize to the scholar who would come to school with the cleanest face. He was unable to recognize some of his pupils the next day.

Fourteen persons at Richmond, Va., were seriously but not fatally poisoned by a colored cook, who put arsenic in some muffins. She gives as the reason for the crime that "the devil got into her."

A thief stole the fruit trees one night recently that John Cooper, a farmer living near Abilene, Kansas, had planted during the day. It is still customary to leave the railroads in that State out over night.

A wedding took place in St. Paul, Minn., recently, where the groom was over 4 feet tall and the bride a little over 2 feet in height. During the ceremony the girl stood on a chair, her head just reaching to the groom's shoulder.

While the body of the late Emperor William, of Germany, was lying in state, his daughter, the Grand Duchess of Baden, placed an ivory crucifix in his hand. Some vandal stole the crucifix, but no clue to the thief has ever been found.

A young Russian nobleman was in a tailor's shop in Paris trying on a garment, when a pistol fell out of his pocket and went off. The bullet wounded him mortally in the lower part of the stomach, and he died a few hours later.

An infant daughter, aged 2½ years, of Millard Davis, disappeared from her home in the Catskill Mountains, recently, and slept the night with a big grizzly bear. The child herself tells the story, so that in crediting it some allowance on that account ought to be made.

An Austrian baron, who desired to commit suicide, consulted a physician about a complaint of his heart in order to find out exactly where it was. He then fired five shots into his body, aiming at his heart, and they having been unsuccessful, he blew his brains out with one shot.

The revival of the ancient Grecian and Roman custom of so fitting up the house roofs as to make them available as children's playgrounds, or breathing spots for older persons during the summer months, is advocated by a New York physician. He argues that the scheme would be an especially happy one for the more crowded cities.

The character of thieves' (a certain class of them) booty seems to be undergoing a complete revolution. Only a short time ago their boldness extended to carrying off stoves. Then it became more expansive, so as to include house roofs; and now one of the rascals out in Kansas has capped the climax by digging up and carting away 500 sweet potato plants.

Almost contemporary with an immense falling off in his trade a New York baker was deluged with complaints about tacks, hair pins, shoe buttons, boot heels and other unhealthy articles of diet having been found in his bread. At once he concluded he was the victim of a conspiracy on the part of his assistants, and several of them, therefore, now languish in jail.

The Emperor of Germany is not alone in his misery as a dying monarch. The Emperor of Brazil is dangerously sick, the Kings of Holland, Portugal and Wurtemburg have incurable diseases; the infant King of Spain is not likely to live to manhood, and the Crown Princes of Russia, Italy, Germany and Baden are all seriously afflicted with maladies which may at any time lead to fatal results.

It is reported from Huntingdon, this State, that while Jerry Green, a farmer, of Porter township, was engaged in ploughing he suddenly stopped his team, and, unhitching his horses, proceeded to the house. He was met by his wife at the barn, and, upon being asked the reason he came home, remarked that it was too dark to work. Subsequently physicians were called in, and an examination disclosed the fact that the man had been stricken with total blindness.

PLEASURE AND PAIN.

BY J. CASSELL.

Oh, take the flying pleasure
And leave the lingering pain.
Love waits not for your leisure,
He may not come again.

In flush of joyful morning
Forget the evening's gray,
And heed not nature's warning
That darkness ends the day.

Revel in life's repose,
Lulled in the shimmering shade,
And strew your path with roses,
Oblivious that they fade.

Ring out the rippling laughter
Across the stream of years,
And leave for days hereafter
The penalty of tears.

Miss Robinson.

S. U. W.

ON one point I feel sure you must agree with me—that few can boast of such constancy as mine. With my hand on my heart I can safely say, that since we parted—during the whole eighteen years that have intervened—I have never once swerved in my allegiance to the lovely Julia Robinson."

Miss Robinson's eyes—lowered to read for the sixth or seventh time the letter which lay before her—were raised to fix themselves on the opposite glass, in which she could see herself reflected.

A soft pink flush had mounted to her cheeks, a little smile played about her mouth. She rose from her chair and went nearer, so that she might take stock of herself more critically.

"I suppose I was thought very pretty," she said. "Everybody tells me so. I don't think I am very altered. My hair is the same,"—and she pulled down an auburn coil sweet seventeen might have envied,—"my complexion is good, and I don't feel old, although I am seven-and-thirty. Thirty-seven!—oh dear!" and she heaved a sigh, and again betook herself to reading the letter.

"I wonder"—this was after another perusal—"would he see much difference in me? Of course he must know that it is impossible I can still be exactly like the picture."

She laughed softly over the recollections stirred up by thinking of that picture—a portrait of herself, which the writer of the letter, a certain Mr. Adolphus Penberthy, had, eighteen years ago, when saying good-bye, possessed himself of surreptitiously, putting it into his pocket while waiting in the drawing-room.

Its abstraction was not discovered until he was well on his way to India, and then—oh, dear! what a terrible fuss ensued; for this was not in the days of photography, and to have a miniature, exquisitely painted on ivory, carried off by a pudding-face young man, overcome by despair because at the height of his calf-love he was sent off to India, was really rather too provoking.

How her father had stormed; how her dear mother had screened her; what a chorus of scorn had the whole family joined in against "that awkward, stupid, loutish, overgrown Dolly Penberthy, whom Julia must have encouraged, or he would never have dared to presume to take such a liberty."

Julia herself has been indignant beyond measure at the libel cast upon her. It was true—and that she did not deny—that she had been guilty of flirting with some men; but with Dolly Penberthy—never! And yet now she was contemplating the possibility of marrying him?

Yes, certainly, while reading the proposal contained in that letter, such an idea had come to her.

For her heart had been touched by so much constancy and devotion; and beyond that, far stronger than she would have cared to admit, was the craving for a love—a love wholly and entirely her own, which was not shared with anybody.

Years, which had robbed our fair Julia of some of her personal charms, had added fourfold to the sweetness of her character; and the girl whose high spirits and light heart had sometimes carried her into what had been justly termed flirtation, had grown into a sweet, earnest, tender woman, with no higher ambition than to be a true wife to the man who would entrust his happiness to her.

She was Auntie to all the little ones around, and every married man of her acquaintance joined in the wonder that Julia still remained Miss Robinson.

Miss Robinson herself might have answered that, many as her offers had been, not one had come from any man she cared for.

And a sorer point to herself than being still single was that she had never yet been in love. Of late it had often occurred to her that she must have looked for too much, that had she said "Yes" where she had said "No," she would have been a wiser as well as a happier woman.

She had not been educated in the days of high schools, classes, and colleges. To take up art or science was quite beyond her.

Somehow district-visits did not seem her vocation, and her attempts at an ambulance class had ended in utter failure.

Poor Miss Julia! she kept a smiling face over a heart that was growing very sore. It seemed as if there was nothing for her to do—nobody wanted her; and in the very midst of this, when the tide of despondency was slowly setting in, this letter had come, saying that she still was enshrined in the memory of one man, who for all these years had kept constant to her, and that if she would consent to undertake so long a journey—for it was impossible for Mr. Penberthy to leave India—she would make him the happiest of men.

He further entered on his means, and the luxuries he could give her, and ended by entreating her to reply by return of post, and tell him that he was not hoping in vain.

Miss Robinson had no longer any parents to consult, both were long since dead. If she had told her sisters that she had had an offer from the Grand Turk, they would have advised her accepting him.

She therefore relied on her own judgment to guide her, and the mail for that month carried out a letter, in which she frankly asked Mr. Penberthy if he had fully realized the change that must have taken place in her since they last parted. She begged him to recollect that while he at forty was still a man in his prime, she was no longer looked on as a young woman; and that until she felt assured these and other facts, set down, were present to his mind, she could not accept his offer, much as it gratified her.

The reply to this letter came in due time, written with all the impetuosity of a most ardent lover.

"If your sweet face was wrinkled, and your lovely hair grown grey," wrote the infatuated Adolphus, "you would only be so much the dearer to me. All I want is to know that you consent to be mine, and accept the name of Penberthy in place of that of Robinson."

* * * * * *

So the matter was decided, and the news was spread abroad, everybody taking quite an unusual interest in the affair, for most of us have a touch of romance in our nature, and it was like a thing one reads in a story.

A young man desperately in love, obliged to go away, running off with his lady-love's picture; and then, after years had passed, writing to her again, to tell her he had always kept faithful, and that now he had made his fortune, he wanted her to share it with him.

There was only one thing to be hoped, that if Miss Julia could not return his love, she would, at least, make it up by her gratitude. Of course, it was plain to see, from what had gone before, that all the affection was on one side.

Still Julia Robinson must remember that she was no longer a young girl, and though she kept her looks very well, as those who knew her now knew, she was not what she had been.

A few of the more officious of her friends undertook to give her some good advice on this score, at which, though she took it quite amiably, Miss Julia smiled.

Her future plan of action was quite decided on in her own mind already. As it lay in woman to be a good wife, that wife she intended to be.

"I will learn to love him with all my heart," she said to herself repeatedly, "he shall never have to regret that he kept constant to me."

And then she would take a good look at herself in the glass, smiling as she turned away, and declaring she was more vain now than at any former time of her life.

Mr. Penberthy had rather dwelt on his good means, and the important position he held.

He had suggested, in language as delicate as he could command, that, seeing it was essential for his wife to go a great deal into society, some of the expenses of the trousseau should fall to his share.

But this Miss Julia would not allow; neither would she permit him to pay her passage-money.

"When I am his wife," she said, "I will accept everything at his hands, but not now. Besides, by selling the little property I have, I can amply provide all I can possibly need."

Most of the many who, prior to her departure, went to inspect the pretty things provided for the outfit, thought that Miss Julia was rather more serious than was demanded by the occasion.

The good-natured girl fancied she dreaded the journey, that she felt going so far away from all her friends; the less kindly hoped she was sufficiently thankful for what Providence had done for her—"Very few girls who had refused one man after another, as she had done, got in the end such a chance as had been given to her."

Well, at length the day of the departure came, but not before a little disappointment had arisen in the failure of the lady under whose wing Miss Julia's journey was to have been made.

At the eleventh hour an extension of leave had been granted to her husband, therefore their departure would be delayed for three months longer.

Under these circumstances Miss Julia had to go alone.

Her courage had sunk very low by the time she found herself on board the vessel. Her family and friends she had parted with; the brother-in-law, who had come down to see her start, had returned in the tender ashore, and she was left alone, straining her streaming eyes towards the friendly land she seemed to be leaving for ever.

Memories thick and fast crowded on her—a terrible sense of being utterly alone took possession of her—and, unable to check the sobs that would come, Miss Robinson hurried down to her cabin below, and for some days nothing more was seen of her.

They had left Southampton on a Tuesday; by the following Sunday the majority of the passengers made an effort to take their places at dinner, Miss Julia among them.

Her neighbor, a well-seasoned old fellow who had made the voyage many times before, vouchsafed her but little attention until some hitch in the serving afforded him rather more leisure; then, with the cross-questioning air of a county court judge, he began—

"Your husband with you? No? Not made the journey before? Ah! Not a good table. Bad cook. Wretched attendance. Captain ought to look after it better. Wife's just dead. Cut up about it, they say. Very sorry. Can't be helped. Happen to us all someday—— Ah!"—this was at the entrance of a dish the good smell of which titillated his nose, and put a stop to further conversation.

Miss Julia, whose appetite was still poor, took the opportunity to look at the Captain—a pleasant faced, genial-looking man, with no particular evidence of grief in his face or manner.

As she passed out he spoke a few words to her, and afterwards during the ensuing week when they met the same courteous little speech was repeated.

As sometimes happens on a voyage, none of the passengers were disposed to be very friendly; after the usual exchange of civilities, each he or she went his way, leaving Miss Robinson to follow her own devices.

One evening she was sitting on deck, beguiled by the lovely moon into remaining later than was usual, when the Captain passed her, passed again, and this time stopped.

"A glorious night," he said.

"Beautiful," she managed to answer.

The voice made him steal a look at the face.

"I'm afraid," he added more gently, "you feel the time rather long. Not a very interesting set of passengers on board, are there? It happens so sometimes. You don't care, perhaps, for the sea?"

"Yes, very much I do. Oh, I think I'm getting on very well," and she smothered a sigh. "When one is by one's self, it is only natural to feel a little lonely"—and a something she could not account for made the tears, which lay very close to her eyes, fall in a quick downpour. "How excessively silly!" she said vexedly.

"Nothing of the kind," and the Captain took a seat beside her. "It will do you good; and you needn't mind me. The poor little woman I've lost used to say that sometimes nothing relieved her like a good cry."

Miss Julia, ever ready with sympathy, thrust away her own troubles immediately.

"You have just lost your wife, they tell me?" she said gently.

"Well, not just; she died eight months ago, but this is the first voyage I've made since."

"Was she long ill?"

"Yes; all our married life she was more or less laid by. She'd been married before she was married to me, and her husband's death was a great shock to her. She never got over it, and then about eighteen months ago the little girl she'd been left with suddenly fell ill, and faded away, and that finished the poor mother. She only lived a little time after."

"That was sad. Sad for both of you."

"Yes,"—he was leaning with his head bent, looking down into the sea, speaking to himself rather than to her,—"I can enter into the feeling of being lonely. While she was there I'd somebody to think of—to do things for. Now, whatever happens, it's all the same," and he sighed despondingly.

Miss Julia had the tact of a true woman. Without preaching, she found a few words of comfort to administer, and this opened up further confidences between them; so that when Captain Stewart bade her good-night on her going below, he remained, saying to himself—

"I quite misjudged her. The man she's going out to marry is a deuced lucky fellow. She's a nice woman, that. One of the right sort. My little Bessie would have got on with her."

Dating from that evening quite a friendship sprang up between Captain Stewart and Miss Julia; they chatted together almost every night sitting on deck.

"The Captain seems very devoted," passengers would say, glancing at the two.

"Oh, but she's going out to be married."

"Is she? Isn't it rather late in the day?"

"It depends on who it's to. What do you guess her age to be?"

"Something in the thirties."

"She's pretty, don't you think?"

"Yes—has been very."

"I wonder how long it is since he saw her?"

"Twenty years, I thought I heard somebody say."

"Good heavens! What abominable constancy."

"It's to be hoped he won't regret having been so true."

"Find her very altered? That may be. Why, she's making up to the Captain. Wants to have a second string to her bow."

Happily, none of these criticisms reached the ears of the two most concerned, so that their cordial intercourse continued uninterrupted, until they neared the port where Miss Robinson was to be met by her faithful lover.

"We're close on what will be the last evening," Captain Stewart said with a regretful sigh. "By this time next week there will be no Miss Julia Robinson."

"Perhaps not in name, but I hope that I shall continue to be—myself the same."

"Not to *me* you won't. No, when I say good-bye to you here—it will be good bye for ever."

"You've made the voyage very pleasant for me."

"That's right. It does me good to fancy I have been of use to somebody. I wish you were going on further."

"I wish so too," she said naively.

"And yet that is not quite as it ought to be. Shouldn't you be all anxiety to see the gentleman you have come out to marry?"

Miss Robinson's speech had slipped out unawares. She made an effort to remedy the mistake she had made.

"I am very anxious," she said gravely; "but when I spoke, I only thought of the sea, and how much"—here she hesitated—"I have enjoyed everything."

There was a pause.

"I shall often think," he said, "over lots of the things you have said to me. You must sometimes cast a thought my way too."

"That you may be sure I shall do."

"I wish," he began, "that I could ask you something, and feel sure you wouldn't be offended by it."

"I promise not to take offence at whatever you may say. What is it you want to know?"

"Well, you know you have not seen this gentleman for many years, and you seem surprised that he should remember you. What made you accept him, and make up your mind to go out to him? I can't fit it in with you. It isn't what I should have expected."

Miss Julia flushed, so that the color in her face was even visible in the dim light.

"No," he said hurriedly, "don't answer me. Forgive me for putting the question; I—I—— Well, don't take any notice of me."

"Yes, but I intend to tell you. Years ago, when I was younger, I had many offers of marriage made me, but I always said no. No one believes me, but really I did not care for anybody. I suppose I forgot that I was growing old. I thought

the right person had not come."

"And he—this one is the right person?" he said, interrupting her.

"I hope he will be. I intend to try and make him so. When his letter came I was very discontented, getting soured, because nobody wanted me; I could not be of use to any one. I mean to try with might and main to make him happy." She said this very resolutely. "I wrote to him first, and told him that of course years had made a alteration in me, and he sent back the most generous reply. I should be more than ungrateful if I did not strive to the very utmost to make him perfectly happy."

"There's no fear but you'll do that," said Captain Stewart earnestly. "He's a lucky fellow; I envy him with heart and soul"—and he sighed deeply.

"Will you promise me that if you should find some nice woman you think would make you happy, you will write and tell me? I should like to rejoice with you."

Captain Stewart shook his head.

"It is impossible, you think? I can well understand you feel so now; but, mercifully, Time is a great softener of trouble."

"It is quite that. I loved the poor little soul who is gone dearly, and there was nothing I would not have done to keep her with me; but—well, you see, she had been married before, and though she tried with all her might to care for me, she couldn't give me a heart that was buried in a grave. I never blamed her. I should do the same if it was to come over again. She was helpless, friendless, stranded, with not a creature to hold out a hand to her. No; thank gracious that I did as I did. She constantly said she couldn't have done without me. Almost her last words were, 'Your reward will come, John. You have been so good to me.' She had a sweet, unselfish nature, dear little soul, and her troubles had been very heavy. There," he added, after a minute's pause, "now you know my story."

"Thank you," she said simply, "for having told me. I believe, with her, that the reward for your generosity is certain to come."

He shook his head.

"Ah, well, of that I'm not so sure—not in the sense I mean. The entire affection of some nice, good woman—that is the only thing of value to me. I'm comfortably off; I need not go to sea if I'd any one to stop ashore for."

Miss Julia smiled.

"Take heart," she said, and there was a little tremor in her voice as she spoke—"the right person will come in your way, and she will be a fortunate woman."

"Ah, Miss Robinson," he said, "some things always seem to go contrary, and some people are always the day after the fair. Goodnight and good-bye, for I feel it is good-bye to you. Gracious bless you, wherever you are."

Two days later they reached Bombay. Mr. Penberthy came to meet his intended bride, and amid effusive good wishes and waving of hands—for the surroundings of the gentleman favorably impressed the passengers—Miss Robinson and he left the ship.

Miss Julia always averred that from the very first moment Mr. Penberthy's eyes met hers, a conviction seized her that in coming out to him she had committed a grevious error.

Very little did she ever say about what took place, and all that could be learned of the matter came from the report of a third person.

These facts, at all events, are certain: that having taken her to the house from which the marriage was to take place, Mr. Penberthy requested her to grant him an interview.

From this interview Miss Julia emerged pale, agitated, but resolute and full of dignity.

Presenting herself to the lady of the house, she simply said that Mr. Penberthy and she found they were in no way suited to each other.

"It was most ill-judged," she added, "after so long a separation, to think of coming out here."

"But the thing is impossible," was her hostess's reply. "Am I to understand that you refuse to marry Mr. Penberthy?"

Miss Julia hesitated.

"It is not exactly that way; but I fully realize how altered I am since he saw me. I believe then I was a nice-looking young girl, but never the beauty he supposes me to have been. The miniature, it is true, was thought like me then; but you know how these things flatter one."

"But, my dear lady, even in personal advantages you have fifty thousand more than Mr. Penberthy ever could have had. Such a slight—and in my house, too! I look upon it as a positive insult to me; I must insist on an explanation. If he has not got his senses, we must bring him to them."

But Miss Robinson entreated her to let the matter be.

"Nothing now," she said, "would induce me to alter my decision. It is true that I did not make the obstacle; but that being raised, has swept all my intentions away. We both deceived ourselves: I in exaggerating his constancy, and he in idealizing me into a beauty. I am most to blame, though, because I have lain myself open to the suspicion of being ready to marry any one. At my age one ought to have more discretion."

"Your age! But your age is quite suitable for him. A selfish, pompous, conceited bachelor, who, when his liver is ruined by eating and drinking, thinks he will take a wife, and is disappointed because the Venus de Medici doesn't come out to him! The thing's unheard of. Such conduct was never known before. It's not to be tolerated. My dear, you're a very nice-looking woman, a very pretty woman; and so far from his presuming to hold his head above you, there are a dozen men about here I could name who would only be too glad to offer themselves to you."

Miss Julia thanked her impetuous friend heartily.

"I shall think," she said, "no more of matrimony; a very bitter lesson has been taught me. I see it all now, and how mistaken I have been; but if you will let me stay here, and help me to find something to do, I shall indeed feel grateful to you."

So the end was that Miss Julia remained; and Mr. Penberthy went away, blamed by all, and altogether cut by many.

In vain he tried to shelter himself from the odium cast on him, by repeating how generously he had proposed to compensate the lady; nay, he went so far as to declare that he had offered, in spite of what had passed, to marry her, and seeing she had treated both these offers with contumely, what any one could find in his conduct to brand with dishonor he failed to see.

About two months later a chance occurred which afforded Miss Robinson an opportunity of returning to her own country.

The children of Major Charnock, lately left motherless, were to be sent to England to be educated there, and at the suggestion of several of the ladies who had become her friends Miss Julia was asked to undertake their care.

Such a charge was exactly what she had wished for, and it was not long before all was arranged and the little party started. It was a relief to have it settled that she was not to return to her native town, where the scrutiny and questioning of her neighbors would have been very trying to her.

As time went on, the wound to her self-respect and pride gradually healed, and the inmost chamber of her heart, hitherto tenantless and empty, was filled by a memory.

Yes, certainly now there was one man—a man she had seen and known—whom, had he asked her, she would have been glad to marry. But, as he himself had said, "Some things seem always to go contrary, and some people are always the day after the fair."

Captain Stewart! Where was he? Had he found the reward that she had told him was some day certain to come? Little wonder at the deep-drawn sigh which followed.

Poor Julia! Poor Miss Robinson!

And yet it so happened, that just then she was not to be pitied so very much. Her time of trial was very nearly at an end, and at last that capricious lady, "Fortune," was about to smile on Miss Robinson.

From the day when he and she had said good-bye at Bombay, not a single word had Captain Stewart heard of Miss Julia Robinson, whom he believed to be Miss Robinson no longer.

"Oh, she has forgotten me long ago," he would say with a sigh. "What more probable? Still, like the fellow she went out to marry, I have remained faithful to her memory. If I could but find somebody like her! As well search for a needle in a bundle of hay."

These thoughts were occupying him one afternoon on his homeward voyage—they were nearing England, a circumstance that always brought his loneliness more vividly before him—when for distraction he joined a party of young Americans, hoping their gay spirits might infect his.

"What are you all chattering about?" he asked, smilingly.

"Oh, Captain Stewart, tell me? Do ladies—real nice ones—go out to India only to get married? Is it so?"

"Well, yes, I think sometimes they do. Why?"

"Because Miss Forster is telling us of one she met when she came back two years ago, who had gone all the way out to Bombay, and then the man wouldn't have her—she had altered so."

The Captain's heart began to thump violently.

"And Miss Howells will have," broke out Miss Forster, "that it served her right. I say that it did nothing of the kind, and that he must have been a real bad sort. In the States they'd have tarred and feathered such a man."

"What was the lady's name?" Captain Stewart felt as if his mouth was filled with glue.

"Miss Robinson."

"Julia?"

"Yes, Julia was her name. You knew her, did you?"

But the Captain had gone. Like an arrow from a bow he shot away, only, however, some five minutes later to return, and say very cheerily—

"Now, about this Miss Robinson; tell me all you know. She went out with me."

"Well, my all isn't very much. I haven't seen her since we said good-bye; but she read aunt's death in the paper and wrote to me."

"And have you her address?"

"Yes, in my pocket-book; you shall have it when I get below. It's in London somewhere."

The voyage, the remainder of which was the most tedious time he thought he had ever spent, came to an end. As soon as it was possible Captain Stewart rushed up to London for the day, and was rattled as fast as he could be taken to a quiet row of unpretending houses in Kensington.

"Is Miss Robinson at home? Does she live here?"

Captain Stewart vowed to Miss Julia that before the maid could answer he thought he must have fainted, so fearful was he that she would say that Miss Robinson had already been turned into Mrs. somebody.

"Is she in?" he added, for the former question was answered in the affirmative.

"Yes, sir; what name?"

But with the impulsiveness of a sailor he passed her.

"Never mind my name, I want to surprise her. Which room?"

"The drawing-room, sir, Miss Robinson's in."

"All right. You needn't come."

He was already up the stairs. He opened the door, and with it in his hand paused to look at her.

"Captain Stewart! Oh! can it be you?"

"It is—no other; and you—still Miss Robinson?"

"Still Miss Robinson," was echoed faintly.

He turned and closed the door, then, coming quickly to her, he took both her hands and held them.

"You know what I have come for. Tell me—will you marry me?"

"But you don't know——"

"I know all I want to know. Answer my question. You said my reward was sure to come—will you give it to me?"

The exact answer that Miss Julia made we do not know; but certainly it was satisfactory, and some minutes later on she added between tears and laughter—

"And I said she would be a very fortunate woman, too. Oh, I never thought that fortunate woman would be me."

The Coral-Girl.

BY A. G. R.

A SWEEPING storm of warm rain, a huge leaden cloud across the blue height of the sky above the Neapolitan sea, one flash of lightning—there! it was over, and the sun reigned supreme again.

And the wild giant of a wind, which had dashed the rain into the faces of travellers, went on his way through the passes of the islands and carried the hurly-burly of his thunder and lightning and rain past Amalfi, past the lovely vine-clad heights, past Salerno, down to the fever-haunted marshes of old Paestum.

With the fresh burst of sun, the score of voyagers on board the "San Carlo" shook their bedraggled selves, and threw off their macintoshes.

The storm was over, no one was washed overboard, no leak was sprung—Madonna is good!

The "San Carlo" was sailing on bravely in the sun, keeping well out from the shore, for it was known that her passengers were all bound for the sight of the Blue Grotto, before going in to Capri town.

"Are those the boats to which we are expected to trust ourselves?" a girl asked, tying instead of untying the strings at the throat of her macintosh.

"They are," her brother answered, a boy of the age that delights in teasing.

"Those cockle-shells in such a sea as this?" Nona still questioned.

"Wait till you see them—they'll see you and me out."

"They won't see me in one, I know."

"All right."

"You are a duffer, Nona!" an elder brother said this. These three of the Morrises were out for the day apart from the main body of father and mother and two elder sisters. All had wintered in in Rome, not because any one of the party suffered from ill-health or from need of any sort whatever—Mr. Morris was simply a rich man who, for a year, had let his place in Suffolk, and who since the past October had been out of England.

Here was May. They had come down to Sorrento; they were flying hither and thither; the heat was now telling them that they must go North, or fever would be down upon them. It was the last week; the boys were always out at sea; now on this morning of occasional rain and wind, they with Nona had come out to see the Grottoes of Capri.

"Thanks," she answered to that accusation of Lewis's. "If a dislike to premature drowning makes one a duffer, then I am a duffer. I decline to go in one of those black wobbling things. I suppose the people here are half savage—primitive creatures that are 'interesting,' as Miss Youngman would say."

"Very primitive; don't they know what's what! They'll do you," Noel said.

The steamer puffed on, and the shoal of black boats came out from the shore, so void to all appearance of any caves or grotto, that Nona Morris, in her secret self, felt superior to any traveller's story of wonderment.

Matter-of-fact commonplace was the master of the hour. The black boats rocked ominously; but they were no cockle-shells, but deep, low-lying craft, which could and would weather many a rough sea.

Pietro, a man the Morris lads had employed before, saw them, and in a volley of Italian, beyond Nona's comprehension, declared his devotion to the Signori, and his willingness to carry them into the Blue Grotto for pure love of Madonna.

"That is grand! And we will save our money. There are three of us to-day, and three is the number each boat carries."

"Three only in that great tub?" Nona cried. No one answered her.

"What a bad day's work for you, Pietro!" Lewis said with a laugh, as he went down the shaky ladder from the "San Carlo" to the "Sirena."

Pietro's eyes gleamed, and his brown handsome face was alight as if he were the very incarnation of happiness.

"Ecco!" he steadied his boat and put out his hand for Nona at the same time. "No, Signor, it is the good day, the day of all days if the Signorina sorella comes; the Signorina is generous!" His face was the picture of infinite trust and glee.

"Is the boat safe?"

"Signorina!" Pietro's arms went up as if he would invoke the whole Olympus. Then with an air of miserable dejection, this "primitive" actor went on. "The poor 'Sirena,' since the day she was built she has never heard so cruel a word! Would she not carry the Signorina safely to—to—England—to the end of the world?"

"That's just where I thought she might be taking me;" but Nona said this under her breath to Noel.

"Where is the grotto? Round the corner?" Nona asked.

"No, no, Signorina. The Signorina sees a little black arch, a low arch on the crest of the waves; there! now we are high up we will see it well!" The "Sirena" here danced in what looked like dangerous frolic to the top of a huge swelling wave.

"That hole! We go in there?"

"Sì, sì. When I shout 'down,' then all lie down flat in there." Pietro here pointed to the deep hollow of the boat, "and, in a moment, the 'Sirena' will be like an angel, and will fly, fly into the beautiful blue water of the Grotto Azzurro."

"Then it is true?" Nona said. "And you boys have not been fooling me?"

"Vile suggestion!" Noel exclaimed. "True as Gospel, dear."

Pietro pulled hard—one need to pull hard in that sea.

After a bit, Lewis said:

"Made your fortune since Monday, eh?"

"Signor!" deprecatingly.

"No? Then how is Carlotta?"

"Tchà!" in an angry burst, and with blazing eyes; "Carlotta is—pah!"

"That's it?—is it——?"

"Will I ever again trust a woman? No, Signor." Pietro here might have been the driest philosopher to judge by the melancholy gravity of his countenance. "Signor, what a woman loves—is gold!"

"I dare say," Lewis said. Being just twenty-three, no doubt he felt himself a competent judge. "And you have not enough of it for her. Who has?"

"It is none other than that Luigi Idyane, he, the swimmer, the man who all the signori pay well, because it is he, and he alone, who can pose like the marble, who flashes like marble and like light in the sparkling atmosphere of the Grotto!" Pietro ground his teeth. "Will I not kill him! He, to stand before me—before me, Pietro Forco!"

"Well, I'll give not one soldo——"

"Shà!"—Pietro listened not—"she knows not what love is! Does she know the heart of Pietro? No. Does she know the heart of that vile Idyane—a stone? Pah!"

Here all his energy was given to his oars, and literally the "Sirena" flew.

"Look out!"

Noel gave a quick warning, and slipped off his seat.

"Down!" roared Pietro.

An instantaneous feeling of rock being close above one's face, one rapid feeling of skimming flight, and—there was the Blue Grotto.

Dazzling blue, radiant cerulean blue, with argent sparkling wavelets, with walls of powdered sapphire dust, with a hush as of mystic marvel, with the fairy drip of opaline gems in place of water-drops from uplifted oars.

Then reality, human, commonplace reality—murmurous talking, louder talking, a laugh, a cry—just amusement; and then from the deep-blue depths a man like sun-lighted silver stands on a dim prow, poises himself, flies, dives, swims.

Nay, what is it all? Only the showman of the Grotto. Why not let Nature do without a showman?

* * * * * *

Midday was past. "The San Carlo" was steaming gradually up to the Capri landing-stage.

The place was a picture—quaint boats rocked on the blue waters; picturesque fisherfolk lolled about on the sun-baked stones. Old women that were crones, but still picturesque in their almost Eastern depth of coloring; children that were very angels for beauty, young imps for rascality; hotel touts; tourists; then, like a phalanx drawn up to conquer, a string of coral-sellers.

The prettiest girls of Capri; ay, and what does that mean? They say that the Capri girls are the most beautiful girls of Italy. It is true. You will see in Capri the most lovely of Italy's lovely children.

Now, a whole morning of companionship makes even Britons sociable in these warm, free, Southern places; so Nona separated from her brothers, chattered to some San Francisco girls she had sat by during the storm.

These girls knew everything.

"You know the name of the belle of coral-sellers, Miss Morris?" one asked.

"No; I've only heard that they tried to do you; they ask no end, but they come down to a lira for a string of coral."

"Worth dollars in New York!" the sister cried. "We're proposing to start a coral store when we leave Europe; we'd make our pile in no time."

"That she is!"

"What!—the belle?"

"Yes, they say she always wears better clothes than the rest—look how she's got up. Look at the plaiting of her hair; lovely! And the rose stuck behind her ear! And, that apron over her scarlet skirt, it's all embroidered on the bands of color—I

wonder if she did it herself? Myl—she is pretty!"

So our girls strolled along.

They were not many minutes before they were asked to buy coral. A red-haired girl was the seller, just like one of those marvellously beautiful fair-haired women of the mediæval pictures—what can be more beautiful than the warm, red-gold hair ruffled and piled above eyes of warm brown, whose lashes of warm brown, too, make the shadowed eyes wells of passion?

Then came a crone with a cracked voice and a tongue that rattled so fast no one could comprehend her; then, again, two children, each with a string of small bits of coral. Persistent were they beyond all the rest, black and golden-haired pictures like the rest.

None bought their bits of poor coral for half a lira, and away tore the scamps, bare-legged and with their fluttering rags streaming in the hot sun, like the radiant pennons of angels.

Pietro was lolling upon his boat which he had dragged up; Carlotta heeded him not, though in all his laziness his eyes stared hungrily and angrily at her.

The young coquette—she was the centre of a circle of young men tourists.

She was tossing her beautiful head and fingering the great amber beads round her throat. "Ah! si, Signor," she was saying, "I spik Inglese. Ze coral is four lire—ze largest is five lire." And she held up her merchandize with inborn peasant grace.

Then the young men haggled, they chaffed, they pretended to teach her English words—they outrageously flirted with her.

Carlotta was equal to them.

She did not know much English, but she knew enough for her trade, and for the rest she laughed as your Italian can laugh, so easily and so gleefully. She showed her pretty white teeth and she shook her dark head, jingling her big ear-rings; she was not going to let these young milords have her coral for one soldo less than she asked.

A dark handsome man, a fisherman seemingly, in a rough jersey, lazily passed along.

He and Carlotta exchanged a glance.

He had not a nice expression, this man. His black head was closely cropped like the head of Nero in the galleries; his brows were straight, and firm, and closely knit; his mouth was close and grave; but—he had the beauty of a Cæsar.

"Ha!" a gay English boy cried, "that's the driver. I know something—eh, Carlotta!"

"Ah! si. The Signor knows—ver mooch. Everything!" she laughed.

"The promesso sposo—there! Who told me?"

"Non capisco, Signor. I not understand."

"You—he—promesso sposo," the lad insisted ignorantly.

The girl laughed. "No, no, no. Carlotta does not say that; Carlotta will wait—will choose." No dainty lady could show more pride than this coral-seller did in the sudden lifting and strengthening of her figure.

"Come to England, Carlotta," the wild boy cried. "There are great Signore there!"

"Then Carlotta may be will come one day. But the coral. Signor, the beautiful coral; and only five lire, will not the Signor buy in ricordanza—to remember Carlotta at Capri?" Her head went on one side with the extremest, most fascinating touch of pathos.

"Dick, pay your money pleasantly, and come on. Don't fool away there any longer. I want some lunch." The boy had his sleeve pulled by an elder man.

So Carlotta pocketed her exorbitant gains, and strolled away up the street. All the strangers were going in at the hotel doors for the meal which was set out for them; trade was done for an hour or so. The beggars and the sellers slipped away, counting their gains, playing at games with the coins, squabbling, gesticulating, idling.

Carlotta sat on a stone in the shadow, thrust out her daintily shod feet, slipped off her heel-less shoes, bit into an orange she pulled out of her pocket, and enjoyed life.

Luigi Idyane went and rolled on the white road at her feet. If he was not her "promesso sposo," he ought to have been, or else why did he assume that air of possession? He was a grim-looking lover, but then he was so handsome.

Presently he got up, and walked lazily up one of the stairways which make the hillside paths up to the high real town of Capri.

At that moment, Pietro rose with a cat-like softness from his lounge on the "Sirena," and he then sauntered up to Carlotta.

"Ecco!" he said between his teeth, and stood darkly before her. "Do I not hear what all men say—what even that stranger boy said to you?"

Carlotta shrugged her shoulders, ruffling up the gathering of white linen that covered them. "People talk so much," she said carelessly.

"It is one thing I hear."

"Veramente! I hear many things, the droll English boys!"

"Bah, English boys. What is Idyane to you, Carlotta?" Pietro thundered.

"A polite man, a gentiluomo."

"And I?"

"You are rude; where is the 'Sirena'? Have you had no trade to-day?" She set her white teeth in the golden pulp of the orange.

"It is true, then!"

He strode away.

"He, he, he! You are so jealous, both of you; all of you are so jealous! Will I be promessa sposa to any one of you? Bah! You are two foolish!" and the great juicy orange disappeared quickly, for although Carlotta laughed, she was feeling a flash of anger against these lovers of hers.

But had she really any love for either of them? At that moment, in her coquettish pride and fury, she would have said "No." But the truth was that a month ago she thought no man in the whole of Capri, nay, in the whole of the great city of Naples, where once she had gone with her father, the equal of Pietro Fusco.

The passing weeks had brought Idyane to her feet—Idyane, the Salerno man who made himself the diver, and what we have called the showman of Blue Grotto. Idyane was rich—grew richer by that speculation of his—would, when the foreign people ceased coming, go back to Salerno and his father's trade.

The wife of Idyane would be a great woman. A Capri peasant girl has her wits, and can look forward as well as another girl.

And the days were always busy; always she had to manage her own coral trade well, and to buy the best strings, so that she should not lose her place of being the first seller. She had really no time, except to amuse herself in the pleasantest way when the one duty of buying wisely and selling profitably was attended to.

So, naturally, Pietro, who was what one may call a much plainer man than Idyane, got pushed aside from Carlotta's pleasure-loving soul.

There she sat, crossing her white-stockinged, shoeless feet lazily.

"They will have a quarrel now," she said to herself; "and I cannot help it if they do."

They did have a quarrel.

* * * * * *

Now the high road of Capri, which leads to the high, rock-built town, goes winding and mounting, winding and ever mounting leisurely and easily. Strings of visitors always went up on donkeys; everyday the same. Every day, too, the children—who clambered like young kids up and down the face of the orange-gardened cliffs—were out pestering people to buys lemons or oranges.

Two of these sat on a broken bit of wall, watching. One had a bough of lemon tree over his arm with three great golden lemons on it; the other boy had nothing, but he jingled the soldi in his ragged pocket which a great bearded foreigner had paid for his fruit.

Behind them dropped the stairway between the orange gardens; just facing them there rose a continuation of the same rising pathway; the slow road goes zig-zag, these stony paths mount sheer and straight.

Two women, who with great baskets on their heads had just passed the boys from the lower path, crossed the road, and then they were mounting.

"I never liked him, the Salernian; he has an evil face."

"Toha! he means nothing."

This was naught to the ragged boys, and they still jingled the soldi.

A cry came from below. Then a scuffle, and stones were heard falling, and then another cry, but this time muffled, and suddenly silenced. Everything was happening at once; the boys would have dashed to the fight, but then ladies were coming, and ladies have soldi.

Down from the wall the boys had leaped making for the descending pathway; now the English voices called the other way.

Away flew the boys. Never before had they looked so handsome in their pleading; never before had they made such a glorification of their wares, or such a pitiful show of need.

"They would really let the three lemons go for 'cinquanta,' fifty soldi!"

Nona Morea was the girl who bought the lemon bough, she would take it to England, she declared, as it was. It was a pretty green and gold thing.

One second, and the two brown-skinned boys were off, and had sprung to their bit of wall, one jump on the far side and they would be on the downward path. If only the fight were but still going on! It would then be a day of luck for the two.

But, as we have said, everything was just happening at once. As the boys for a second poised on the broken wall for their leap down, a man, a sailor-looking man, sprang from the gap of the path.

His eyes gleamed, his jersey was ripped up; but in a second he was gone, a flying stride carried him over the road, and up, up he went, scorning the path, and flying like a wild thing from crag to grove and grove to crag. Boys and English strangers stood agape.

"What is it? Why——!" somebody gasped.

The boy of the lemon bough danced up to Nona, throwing up his arms. "It is a quarrel, a fight—down there. Ah! it is a great murder, certamente! Come, Signorina!"

* * * * * *

It was true; there had been a quarrel and a fight.

It was not Idyane's fault, either, that there was not "a great murder." He had stabbed Pietro.

There the man lay with the dear life ebbing away.

The boys forgot their soldi—and they not news which was something like news? They were down on the shore, and the whole crowd of shore folk blocked the starting-place of the pathway more instantaneously than we can show.

Nona's brother was a young doctor, he did what he could to stanch the wound. He and the three or four companions carried the unconscious Pietro down the hill.

They laid him on the ground at the very place where Carlotta had sat and coquetted with Idyane, and had bitten so pleasantly into the ripe orange.

Carlotta was in the crowd. She stood like a stone.

"He will not die," the Englishman said.

Still Carlota stood rigid. She could not see Pietro's ashy face—she would not try to see it.

But her heart! Carlotta would never again be a coquette.

There was a movement, and someone said: "They carry him to his house."

The movement was wrong, the wound burst forth afresh, the man's head fell back.

"He is dead! He is dead!" an old woman cried. "Ahime! Ahime!" and she threw up her skinny brown arms.

Thereupon Carlotta, the marble, motionless Carlotta, gave one shriek and dashed into the crowd.

In shocked surprise everyone gave way to her.

She knelt by Pietro.

"Pietro! Pietro! Speak!" she cried. "Is it not I who have killed you, I, Carlotta? Make me to die with you! Oh, anima mia! anima mia!"

She kissed him a thousand times. And—and—those kisses broke the deathlike faint.

* * * * * *

Now, if you would see Pietro and Carlotta you must go to Capri. They are always busy there; and Carlotta asks as much for her coral as she ever did, and she makes a toddling baby ask more.

CURIOUS WEDDINGS.

The blacksmiths of "Gretna Green," in Scotland, forged matrimonial chains. One of these self-constituted parsons—an old soldier named Gordon—when he officiated at the hymeneal altar, probably in the smuggery of some "pub," always wore a grand military uniform, consisting of a large cocked hat, red coat, and high boots, with a ponderous sword and scabbard dangling at his side.

This imposing personage tied the marriage knot in about two minutes, which would be very convenient despatch from those fugitive candidates for wedlock who could see their guardians tearing after them at race speed, not more than a mile or so distant.

Wily dames prowled along London streets anxious to supply wives to innocents or clergymen to amorous pairs. A clever artist thus exhibits a nuptial party, drinking and making merry in a tavern. "The chief table of the festival room is covered with punch-bowls, glasses, pipes, and dishes, and is surrounded by a jovial crew. The simple sailor, on whom a shameless varlet has foisted a questionable hussy, is surveying proudly the features and dress of the unworthy bride. The lawyer is preparing the marriage statement, and the clergyman who bound the pair, together with the smiling and benign mother-in-law, are jolning in the carousals." Even school-boys, on their way through London to their homes in the country, were seized by the myrmidons of these dissipated parsons, and married to syrens unfit to become members of any decent family.

Thomas Filsby, a deaf and dumb man at Leicester, declared his purpose to marry Ursula Bridget, a talkative spinster, at church, in the following way: "Having embraced Ursula with his arms, he took her by the hand and put the nuptial ring on her finger. He laid his right hand significantly on his side nearest his heart, and; putting their palms together, extended both his hands to heaven. Having thus sued for the divine blessing, he declared his resolve to live with Ursula until death should part them by closing his eyelids with his fingers, digging the earth with his feet, as though he wished to make a hole in it, and then moving his arms and body as if he were tolling a funeral bell."

The register of one parish, records under date October, 1714, a bride being married who was clothed simply in a long garment of white cotton, wishing to signify by her scanty costume that she came to the bridegroom free of pecuniary embarrassments.

A feminine but unwomanly impostor, in male attire, was pilloried in Cheapside, after she had been proved at the Old Bailey to have married three different women, whom she had robbed of all their money and clothes, and then deserted within a brief time of the spurious marriages with her dupes.

Two young ladies, disappointed in love affairs, rented a London tavern, where they lived and prospered as man and wife for the period of thirty-six years, preserving the secret of the sham husband's sex until the wife sickened and died. On her death-bed she made a will, wherein she bequeathed half of $15,000 to her relatives; the surviving impostor endeavored to persuade the registers that the wife was of unsound mind, but eventually her husband-like career was brought to a close by the inquisitive actions of the deceased woman's kinspeople.

Howe, in his Table Book, relates an instance of relationship becoming rather confusing by marriage: "One Hawood had two daughters by his first wife, the eldest of them was married to John Cashiok the father, the younger to John Cashiok the son; Cashiok the father had a daughter by his first wife, whom old Hawood married, and by her had a son. Cashiok's second spouse was, therefor, the mother of her father, mother, sister, and grandmother to her brother.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The streets of Carthagena, Mexico, says a writer, are as in other Spanish-American cities, named after the saints, battle-fields and famous generals, but as the houses are not numbered, it is difficult for a stranger to find one that he happens to want to visit. The police do duty only at night. During the day the citizens take care of themselves. Four policemen are stationed at the four corners of a plaza. Every fifteen minutes a bell rings, which causes the guardians of the city to blow their whistles and change posts. By this system it is impossible for them to sleep on their beats. They are armed with lassoes and by the dexterous use of this formidable weapon they pinion the prowling thief when trying to escape. They also have a short bayonet as an additional weapon.

H. S. Green, a young man who is a newspaper correspondent by profession in Michican, is locked up in the insane department of a jail there awaiting an examination. Some time ago he secured permission to investigate the insane asylum for the purpose of writing a newspaper article, and while being shown through the building manifested unmistakable signs of insanity. He became very angry when taken away by Superintendent Hare, who thought the sights were affecting his brain. Green threatened to make things warm for the Superintendent he was so persistent in his demand to the Governor for an investigation of what he called abuses that one was finally ordered, which resulted in the proof that he is himself insane.

The Queen Regent of Spain seems to be one of the really remarkable women of the time. She ought to be; for she has an exceedingly delicate mission to carry out during the long minority of her little son, Alphonso XIII. She is said to be kind and gentle to those who come to her in trouble, but cold and hard to those who forget or neglect their duty towards her. Often when listening to some old general or courtier who is bent on flattering her, and who fancies that he is delighting her with excessive praise, the Queen unconsciously indulges in a very mocking smile, and a mischievous look that is as becoming as it is appropriate. She is fond of reading and loves music. A telephone connects the palace with the opera house so that her Majesty can listen to the singers without having to leave her room.

The glass-eating mania has lost its popularity of late, and now a young man who has been astonishing the natives in St. Louis, by his appetite for goblets, wine-glasses, etc., gives the craze another set back by declaring that glass-eaters are not always what they seem. In other words they are more careful of themselves than would appear, as instanced in the case of a colored man, who "had a set of false teeth with a rubber tube attachment, which he pushed down his throat with a wire. When the tube was full Bill had to quit glass-eating, and slip off and empty his tube. One day the thing didn't work right, and a big chunk of glass got in between the tube and Bill's throat. He tried all his might to get it out, but it wouldn't come out, and Bill died." Such, at least, is the St. Louis eater's "curious" story, which he does not apply to himself, as he insists that he has actually swallowed glass for a number of years.

Nevada horse raisers and ranchmen on the Pioche and White Pine ranges are complaining of the wild horses of that region. In the Shellback Mountain are bands of 150 to 200 of these horses, each under the leadership of powerful stallions, and they make regular raids on the ranches and run off the horses of the ranchmen. A horse once gone is gone forever, the Nevada men say, for the wild horses are very cunning and wary, and will not let a man get within rifle shot of them. The nuisance became so great that last spring fifteen experienced horsemen and hunters started out with the object of killing off as many of the "boss" stallions as possible. In ten day's hunt they managed to kill just one horse. The wild horses of Nevada average about 800 pounds weight, and when caught are almost the most ugly beasts alive. But if they be thoroughly subdued and broken, they make the most serviceable draught horses imaginable.

Photography is gaining prominence in the criminal Courts. With its help a Berlin merchant was lately convicted of crooked ways in keeping his accounts. The slightest differences in color and shade of ink are made manifest in photographic copy. Blue inks appear nearly white; brown inks, on the contrary almost black. The books of the accused were submitted to a photographer, who took off the pages concerned and brought into Court the most undoubted ocular proofs of the illegitimate after-entry of some of the accounts. A subsequent chemical test substantiated this evidence. The photographic is to be preferred to the chemical test, because it brings its proofs into the Court, and submits them to inspection, at the same time leaving the document under examination unharmed; while the results of a chemical test must be taken on the evidence of the chemist alone, and the writing examined is perhaps destroyed. In another case similar to the above the changing of the date of a note by an insignificant erasure and addition was proved by photography.

Our Young Folks.

LILY'S SURPRISE.

BY MINNIE DOUGLAS.

LILY MAYNE stood looking from the cottage door, over the green fields, thinking pleasant thoughts in the soft autumn sunlight.

"I see the children coming, Aunt Rachel," she said, turning to a delicate-looking woman, who had just risen from a little round table, on which stood thimble, scissors, cottons, and, oh, so many pins!

"The kettle boils," said the aunt, taking down a little tea-caddy, and putting a plate of bread-and-butter ready for the hungry little ones, who ran in with excited faces.

"The Squire's bonfire will be the biggest as ever was made!" announced six-year-old Tommy, with wide blue eyes and crimson cheeks. "Farmer Jones has sent piles of faggots, and there's a big barrel of tar."

"Yes," said Kate, pulling off her hat, and hanging it up; "there's to be a grand dinner for all the farmers, and tea and games for the schools—oh, it will be nice!"

"Come to tea, dears," said Miss Harris; and soon the merry voices were hushed, and the serious but welcome business of finishing a large plate of bread-and-butter commenced.

The aunt was a dressmaker. She had been lady's maid to Miss Alice Moore, the sister of the young Squire of Moore Park, whose coming-of-age was to bring such rejoicings.

Five years before my story begins Rachel Harris gave up her comfortable place, and made a home for the little Maynes, whose mother had died suddenly, after hearing that her sailor husband had been drowned at sea.

There were Lily, Kate, and baby Tommy, homeless and helpless, when the kind aunt resolved to try and fill their mother's place for them. Her young mistress was sorry to lose so good a servant, and arranged that she should live in one of the Squire's cottages, and still make dresses for herself.

"I will work for you thankfully, Miss Alice," said Rachel; "and I shall be very glad for my niece Lily to learn the trade from me."

So Lily had begun her work at twelve, and at fifteen was a really clever worker, having tried her best to please and help her aunt.

The day after the children ran home with their news, Miss Alice drove down to the cottage. Rachel Harris, the dressmaker, went out to the door, smiling with pleasure at the sight of her "young lady," as she still called her.

"Here, Rachel," said Miss Alice, handing a parcel from the pony carriage, "this is my white cashmere dress for you to alter!" and she added, after giving full directions, "please let me have it home for certain in time for dinner on the twenty-fifth—my brother's birthday.

"Certainly, miss; you shall have it."

"Be sure that you and Lily come with the little ones," said Alice Moore, nodding brightly to the neat-looking girl who had come towards the door. "There will be amusement for everyone, Lily," she cried, as she drove away.

"Oh, auntie, what a nice day it will be!" said Lily, glowing with pleasure; "you'll come, auntie, won't you?"

"I should like to," said the aunt, looking wistfully over the green downs towards where she had lived in service years before. "We'll get the work forward, Lily. There's the Miss Patchems' two dresses to finish, and one to make for little Miss Watt, then Miss Alice's beautiful cashmere I'll begin upon at once, and you can go on with the flounces for Miss Watt's frock."

How busy they soon were! The children had their tea out in the garden, and waited on themselves.

In between times the neat frocks of the little Maynes were got ready, for Miss Harris was always careful that the motherless children should look neat. Tommy had a new sailor suit; and on the night before the birthday every one was happy, and the work so nearly done, that an hour or two in the morning would finish it.

Alas! when that bright, sunny twenty-fifth of September came poor Rachel Harris could not lift her head from her pillow, for one of her worse headaches had attacked her.

The little ones were told to play about until it was time to get ready. Good, steady Lily looked over all the work that was done, packed it neatly, and sent it home with a little bill pinned on the top of each parcel.

Kate and Tommy carried the Miss Patchems' dresses and little Miss Watts. They ran proudly back, bubbling two little parcels of money, which Lily took from them with a downcast face.

"Isn't it time to dress, Lily?" asked Kate, who was red as a peony.

"Yes, as soon as you get cool. I shan't be able to go."

"Not go! Oh, Lily!" cried the others, in sorrowful chorus.

"Hush! auntie's head is very bad, and Miss Alice must not be disappointed of her dress in time for dinner," said Lily; adding, as she bravely choked her tears, "I'm going to finish it, and I'll take it home in time—to—see—the bonfire!"

"And no tea, nor cake, nor nothin'," lamented downright Tommy.

The younger ones were neatly dressed, and started for their walk over the downs, to where the great trees of the park would give cool and shelter. Lily sat patiently down, after bathing her poor aunt's head, and set to work on Miss Alice's dress, trying not to look at the long curving road across the fields, which could be seen above her geraniums in the cottage window.

Crowds of merry children played under the trees; there were so many things to attract them.

Miss Alice, with many ladies and gentlemen staying at the park, went amongst them all, and at last caught sight of little Kate Mayne.

"Well, Kate, you look very solemn; what are you thinking about?"

Kate blushed, hesitated, and at last opened her brown eyes very wide, as she whispered—

"Please, Miss Alice, you looks so pretty in that dress!"

"Do I?" laughed Alice; "it is a very cool one. What else have you got to say?"

"Please, miss, that cashmere is awful thick!"

"My cashmere? oh, yes—much too hot to wear to-day! Did you bring it home?"

"No, miss—auntie's ill, and Lily had to stay at home to finish it," said Kate, looking very earnestly up in the young lady's face.

"Oh, Kate, I am so very sorry!" said Alice.

"May I run home for her, miss?" asked Kate.

"No—not you, dear; I'll send at once."

So it happened that about 3 o'clock, just as Miss Harris had come down to sit in the cool parlor, feeling better after the cup of tea Lily had brought her, a sound of wheels was heard.

Lily did not look up until the sound ceased suddenly, and the lash of a whip went across the lattice.

Then she ran to the door, and saw one of the grooms from the park in a neat cart. He nodded to her, and handed her a note for her aunt, telling her to "look sharp."

"Oh, auntie, has he come for the dress?" asked Lily.

But her aunt read—

"DEAR RACHEL,—I don't want my dress to-day. Come over in the cart with John, and bring Lily. I'll send you home to-night.

Yours truly,

"ALICE MOORE."

A few minutes served to dress and lock up the cottage—then the quick drive along the winding white road, and they arrived just as the children were singing their grace before tea.

After games and merry-making until 9 o'clock the most splendid bonfire was lit in an open space in the park.

How the flames leaped up, and lit the faces of the men, women, and children who stood round! Lily stood close beside her Aunt Rachel, on whose other side were the happy children.

What made Aunt Rachel start with a little cry as her eyes met those of a sunburnt sailor who had walked into the ring of light?

Another moment, and our patient Lily was clasped tight in her father's arms, crying and laughing by turns.

After shipwreck and years of captivity, William Mayne was spared to come home once more to his children, and to-night he had learned for the first time of his wife's death.

How the friends of the returned sailor crowded round him! The young Squire heard the news, and quickly turning from his friends, exclaimed—

"Bill Mayne alive! He first taught me cricket! Where is he?"

And many men recalled that night their boyhood's days, and rejoiced to hear the young Squire say—

"You'll stay among us now, Bill. Lots of work for you. The birds get all the fruit, and you must make and mend nets for me, and look after those nice children of yours at home with Rachel."

The sailor passed his arm across his eyes. In spite of the great sorrow of which he had been told that night, the frank, bright sympathy of all about him touched his heart with comfort; and the Squire promised to come down and hear the yarn of his wonderful adventures at the village club, where all the men had pressed Bill Mayne to meet them next night.

And what a happy little dressmaker our Lily was, as she lay in bed watching the moon through the lattice window!

CAUGHT AT LAST.—"It must be very lonely sitting all by yourself in the office balancing your books at night, John," said an affectionate wife.

"It is, my darling."

"I have been thinking about it for some time, and now I have a delightful surprise for you."

"A delightful surprise?"

"Yes, dear. I sent for my mother yesterday, and I expect her every minute. I mean to have her stay with us for awhile. She will take care of the house at night, and look after the children, and I can come and sit in your office with you while you work."

"Y—e—s—but—I—I couldn't think of your walking down there all alone, you know, dear."

"It is my duty, John, dear. I ought to have thought of it before, but it never came to my mind till yesterday. Oh, John, forgive me! Forgive me for not thinking of your comfort sooner. But I will go with you to-night."

"To-night?" Why, I—I—the fact is I got through with my books last night."

"Oh, you did! How delightful! And you can now stay at home every evening! I'm so glad!"

And the delighted wife ran off to make preparations for the reception of her mother, while her husband with sombre brow sat staring at the coals in the grate, in which he could see the picture of a mother-in-law's reproving face and of a poker party with a vacant chair.

THE VIOLET'S WISH.

BY A. P. S.

IT was bright beautiful spring-time, when everything was waking into fresh life. Snowdrops were nearly over, pale primroses were starring banks and hedgerows, and violets were shyly unfolding in sheltered places.

Birds sang their sweetest of love, home delights, and a happy summer to come; there was a stir and a scent in the air that made the dullest nature rejoice, for none can withstand the universal joy of spring.

But no happiness is perfect in a world where discontent is so apt to creep in to mar the beauty of God's handiwork. Away from danger and evil influence of every sort, a tuft of white violets awoke from winter's sleep.

One by one the buds pushed their pink-stained, closely-folded petals upwards and outwards, to open and gaze thankfully with golden eye at the sunbeams that warmed them into life.

What mattered it that these beams came scantily to the clustering leaves through boughs and lace-like twigs of trees far above? they were sufficient for the well-being of the violets, ample to carry their message to the humble dwellers in the forest. And for a while all went well.

But the time came when the sweet white flowers began to wonder why they were made, since no eye saw them, no passer-by paused to admire, no hand to pluck them.

"What good are we?" they murmured—"set down to live out here, far away from anyone to whom our existence might give pleasure."

"You grumblers!" cried a robin alighting beside them, his scarlet breast and twinkling brown eyes looking brighter than ever in the sunshine. "What can you wish for more than what you have already? A life sheltered from every trouble, every danger; food in plenty from the moist earth, and the dews from above, warmth from the rays in which I bask at this moment, companionship in each blade of grass and plant around you. You deserve a scolding!"

"But we please no one, we do good to no one, we have nothing to do," retorted a chorus of tiny voices from among the leaves.

"Nonsense!" and redbreast's eyes gave an indignant twinkle. "You flowers are a constant delight to us birds, and do you count us nothing, pray? What a glorious world it is! I am so happy, so thankful, and you would be too if, instead of sleeping away the winter-time in warmth underground you had to rough it through frost and snows, often depending on men's charity for a morsel to keep away the pangs of starvation."

"Surely it is not wrong to wish we might do something to help or comfort others?" said a pale half-opened bud meekly, and she hung her head, ashamed of speaking after the robin's rebuke.

"No, perhaps not" replied the other, pluming his feathers after a dip in the tiny stream that wound along over the grass near the violet tuft. "I will tell you what to say to the south wind, and if he thinks well he will carry on the message. Meanwhile rest in peace, friends, and be assured few wishes are left unanswered if they be right ones."

So redbreast flew away, and sang of the flower's desire to the breeze that came softly to meet him as he flew. The breeze knew the desire was no selfish one, born of craving for change or excitement; so he whispered it to a little child who sauntered along barefoot and in rags for spring treasures to sell in the next town.

"Oh, what a sweet smell!" cried the child, stopping short, and sniffing the air. "There must be violets close by, and in bloom."

Then the south wind passed gently on, for the message was given, and the wish of the flowers was soon to be fulfilled.

They had uttered it without counting the cost; true, when with a sharp pang they found themselves cut off from the mother plant and gathered into the little one's hands, the poor things drooped in dismay, vaguely wondering what would come next. But they soon plucked up heart, and saw the reason of this change in life when reviving in a drop of water at the bottom of a broken glass. The beauties of the forest home were gone, the sun shone dim through the dust-stained panes of an attic window, no bird-songs could be heard, and only the blue sky looked the same. Indeed the violets were much nearer to this than they had ever been, and inside that poor room in the roof a fame sick girl watched the sweet flowers with as much delight as they from the window-ledge watched the changeful sky outside. Every morning did the girl put fresh water into the glass.

But alas! they pined in spite of all from day to day. They missed the country home, the easy life, the pure air; so they faded and drooped over the broken edges until they were almost at death's door. Still there was no word or thought of repining, not even when redbreast perched one morning on the woodwork of the open window to ask them how they did?

"Well, very well," was the feeble answer, "We have suffered, we are dying, but we have done some thing for others, and we are content to die. A life of selfish pleasure or ease is not worthy of the name; it is mere existence, but all self-denial for the good of others glorifies existence into life."

So the violets withered; and the sick girl threw them away, with a sigh of regret that the delight they had given her should have passed thus quickly.

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING.

To those who are intent upon making the best of life, it is not a little depressing to be told by the chief interpreters of life, the poets and the philosophers, that our earthly existence does not amount to much. One informs us that "Death doth lurk always in life's delicious cup;" and a second declares that "The life of man is summ'd in birthdays and in sepulchres."

Looking at life, however, from the standpoint of experience rather than of preconception and of theory, we cannot but think that even the much-decried physical state of being is worthy, not only of being borne with, but of living.

One is inclined to think that the dark-hued pessimistic views of this our life arise from that unhealthy condition of body by which poets and philosophers have been so often characterized.

Not that they have not been able to bear the pains of being, but they have made too little of physical well-being, and have often failed in consequence to feed the fires of their genius with essential fuel. Far better would it have been had they held with the adage that "a hale cobbler is better than a sick king."

Physical well-being is a matter of health; and when in ill-health it is just as well to own, that our feeble flesh doth waste because there is something wrong in it; and then make it our business to get that something out of it as speedily as possible.

This, of course, cannot always be done, hence it is incumbent to watch the ways, and keep the enemy out of the citadel, on the ground that an ounce of prevention, as the old saying has it, is better than a pound of cure.

To do this there must be a proper balance of work and play, of exercise and rest, of ment and drink, of mental sustenance and social recreation, and of the highest consolations.

It is not a work of supererogation in our time to say that the balance of work and play, especially in the sense of toil and idleness, needs very much to be adjusted. Some people work too hard, others not enough, and others not at all. A proper amount of work is helpful to physical well-being.

As for idleness, it is, one old author puts it, "the bane of the body and mind, the nurse of naughtiness, the chief author of all mischief, one of the seven deadly sins, and a great cause not only of melancholy but of many other diseases."

These things need all the more proper balancing, because though work, when it deteriorates into drudgery is the beginning of physical dissolution, "Idleness is the gate of all harms."

A HEARTY LAUGH.—After all, what a capital, kindly, honest, jolly, glorious good thing a laugh is! What a tonic! What a digester! What an exorciser of evil spirits! Better than a walk before breakfast, or a nap after dinner. How it shuts the mouth of malice, and opens the brow of kindness! Whether it discovers the gems of infancy of age, the grinders of envy or the pearls of beauty, whether it racks the sides and deforms the countenance of vulgarity, or dimples the visage or moistens the eye of refinement—in all its phases, and on all faces, comforting, relaxing, overwhelming, convulsing, throwing the human form into happy speaking and quaking of fun—under every circumstance and everywhere a laugh is a glorious thing. Like "a thing of beauty," it is "a joy for ever."

There is no remorse in it. It leaves no sting, except in the sides, and that goes off. Even a single, unparticipated laugh is a great affair to witness.

It is more infectious than scarlet fever. You cannot gravely contemplate a laugh. If there is one laugher and one witness, there are forthwith two laughers. And so on. The convulsion is propagated like sound. What a thing it is when it becomes epidemic!

A MOTHER'S PARTING WORD.—"And, above all, Nellie, my love," were the parting words of a lady to her daughter, as the cab to convey the newly married pair to the station drew up at the door—"above all, Nellie, if you should quarrel—for Reginald is but a man, and life is full of thorns—remember that your first duty is to yourself as a lady and a housekeeper. Never hit your husband with a rolling-pin or a potato-masher. You will never forgive yourself if the result of such a blow were to be the appearance of a hair at the table in a dish of mashed potatoes or a pie crust when you had company at dinner. The poker will do just as well, and is infinitely more lady-like. Good-bye. Write every day, and don't forget your poor old mother! Boo-hoo!"

YOUNG mother (to photographer)—I am sorry, Mr. Camera, but the negatives you sent of baby don't suit. Photographer—None of them? There were six. Young mother—Yes; I like this one very well, although it doesn't do baby justice, but mother thinks it horrible. The one she likes I wouldn't consider for a moment. Baby's papa thought this one would do, but his grandma became indignant at the idea, and I agreed with her. The dear little fellow's Aunt Kate thought they were all bad, and I guess—ere—that baby will have to sit again.

TO BE FULFILLED.

BY SUSANNA J.

Not lonely and not friendless, though it seems
Thou art so far from all thou hast desired
Since thou hast lost the light of morning dreams
That kept thy spirit hopeful and untired;
Their light may be withdrawn, their beauty chilled—
Their prophecies are yet to be fulfilled—

To be fulfilled, though thou shouldst work alone,
Thy hopes and aspirations shared by few,
(Though hearts be not responsive in each tone,
Yet are they not less generous and true);
And all great works, earth's most enduring gain,
Have been wrought out in silence and with pain.

Go on then, and look forward to the time
When all thy fears and all thy mental strain
Shall be forgot, and in the light sublime
Life's work and its results alone remain:
Each vict'ry over self, each loving care
For others' good shall be remembered there.

So true it is that he who weeping goes
Through Life's bare fallow, sowing precious grain,
Shall reap a hundred-fold of that he sows,
And, bearing golden sheaves, shall come again
Rejoicing home, his heart with triumph thrilled.
Thus—thus are Youth's fair prophecies fulfilled!

OF HUMAN SACRIFICE.

It is in West Africa that the customs of human sacrifices still survive in all their horror. Hundreds are killed at Coomassie, whenever any of the blood-royal dies, solely that the Prince or Princess may not want attendants in the other world.

Again and again a trader or traveler has had to look on at these "customs;" but the horrors were never fully described till 1873, when some German missionaries, were prisoners in the town at the time of the Crown Prince's death. As soon as he was seen to be dying, the executioners began to scour the streets for victims.

When they caught anyone, two of them would come behind and each thrust a knife through the cheeks, the blades passing over the tongue, and a handle sticking out on each side. This is to prevent the poor creature from "swearing on the life of the King"—i.e., swearing that if he dies, the King must die too—in which case, instead of being killed, he would not only be spared, but ranked among the "okra," courtiers whose life depends on that of the King, and who—killed when he dies—hold till his death, places of trust and honor.

Besides those thus caught every great chief had to offer a victim; but the number was chiefly made up of slaves and prisoners of war. The wives painted white, and covered with gold ornaments—sat round the coffin, keeping of the flies. They were strangled at the funeral. So were six pages, who, similarly painted and adorned, sat by the dead man.

They had known their fate some days before; but none ran away, save three wives of low birth, whose place was at once supplied by other girls. For nine days the slaughter went on, the people fasting, with shaven heads and bodies painted red, but drinking all the more. And this death-wake was to be repeated forty days after.

When a King dies, the victims are slain at the rate of two hundred a week for three months. But there have been "greater customs" than these. A King's mother died in 1816; her son slaughtered three thousand people, two thousand being prisoners just captured.

A royal burial there is on this wise: At the bottom of a huge grave are laid the heads of the slain; on them the coffin rests. Then, just before the earth is thrown in, one of the bystanders—a freeman, if of some rank so much the better—is suddenly clubbed, a gash made in the back of his neck, and he is rolled in upon the coffin. The idea is to send along with the crowd of slaves and prisoners, someone who shall look after them as a sort of ghostly "major domo."

For a King there remains yet another "custom." At the end of thirty moons the grave is opened, the royal bones fastened together with gold wire, and the skeleton placed in a long building divided into cells, the doorways to which are hung with silk curtains.

Then, on his birthday, the King of Ashantee goes early to the house of the royal dead. Every skeleton is taken from its richly ornamented coffin where it has lain surrounded by the things that had been most pleasing to it in life, and is placed on a chair to welcome the visitor.

As the King enters each cell with a meat and drink offering to the departed, the band plays the favorite melodies of that particular King, and, unawares, the royal visitor signs to the executioners who have followed him, and an attendant is pierced through the cheeks and killed, the King washing the skeleton in the warm blood. The same work goes on at the next cell, and so on, the fearful work going on far into the night.

The band plays a signal as each victim is slaughtered. Two blasts of the horn mean, "death, death;" three drum taps, "cut it off;" one beat from a big drum, "the head has fallen." The signal is taken up by other bands, and all through the city horn-blowing and drum-beating goes on unceasingly.

The Ashantees always say of a drum, "it speaks;" and every traveller admits that they manage to elicit from that unmanageable instrument a most varied range of sound. The sounds form words, the whole rhythm a sentence, readily understood by native listeners. Each chief has his own "call," just as each Highland clan had its own battle tune.

Of course this constant killing makes the people callous to suffering and brutal to their prisoners. Their feeling in regard to death is not courage but apathy. The spectators are as delighted at these revolting "customs" as the Roman populace was at the gladiators' shows.

Now and then a victim is tortured. The missionaries watched one who, besides the knives through his cheeks, had a couple of forks thrust in his back. He was then dragged before the King, gashed all over the body, his arms cut off, and in this plight compelled to dance for the amusement of the royal savage.

All the Ashantee human sacrifices, however, are not personal. When war is impending a victim is pegged down to the ground in the shape of an "x," stakes being driven through the body and the poor wretch left to die on the war-path by which the invader will have to travel. No native army would pass such an obstacle; it would turn back and cut a fresh way through the forest.

The Ashantee believes that everything has a soul; when he offers a dish of rice to a god he is not troubled because his rice remains where he placed it; the soul of the rice has been eaten, and that, for spiritual purposes, suffices.

Human beings have two souls; one, the shadow of the body, which, after death, goes to the world of shadows, there to live a life precisely like the man lived here; the other, a something corresponding exactly with the "genius" of the Romans, a guardian spirit needing—as the "genius" did—to be propitiated with sacrifice, and after the man's death, either staying in the house where he died, to vex the inmates with sickness or misfortune, or else entering into another body. During life this "genius" generally wanders away at night and dreams are the adventures which befall him.

Grains of Gold.

To many the death of the beloved is the parent of faith!

He only employs his passion who can make no use of his reason.

The most wasted of all days is that on which one has not laughed.

Make no enemies; he is insignificant indeed that can do thee no harm.

The truly wise man should have no keeper of his secret but himself.

Every absurdity has a champion to defend it; for error is always talkative.

One may live as a conqueror, a king, or a magistrate; but he must die as a man.

Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.

The first evil that attends those who know not to be silent is that they hear nothing.

In one thing men of all ages are alike; they have believed obstinately in themselves.

The less you can enjoy, the poorer, the scantier yourself—the more you can enjoy, the richer, the more vigorous.

The highest point to which things can bring one is contentment of the mind, with which no estate is miserable.

If you be nettled with severe raillery, take care never to show that you are stung, unless you choose to provoke more.

A Christian should not discover that he has enemies by any other way than by doing more good to them than to others.

To neglect at any time preparation for death is to sleep on our post at a siege; to omit it in old age is to sleep at an attack.

Femininities.

A woman is never prettier than she wants to be.

Little maids, like weakest liquors, are soonest soured.

The two cardinal sins in conversation are talkativeness and silence.

There are 347 women blacksmiths in England and 9136 nail makers of the same sex.

A certain style of shoe button is called "Old Maid's Wedding," because it never comes off.

There are few occasions when ceremony may not easily be dispensed with, but kindness never.

Miniature coal scuttles and buckets of silver are among the latest pendants offered for chains.

Ada: "I had ten offers of marriage last week." Ella: "How monotonous and persistent of Jack!"

Gold initials, suggestive of the owner's name, are much admired as pendants for glove buttoners.

A woman in New York died recently from the effects of swallowing four false teeth on a rubber plate.

Women are naturally truthful, especially when they are talking about another woman that they don't like.

The Princess of Wales and her associates are setting the fashion of wearing as much jewelry as possible.

Queen Victoria has sent to the Glasgow Exhibition two table napkins manufactured from yarn spun by her own hands.

Our passions are like convulsion fits, which, though they make us stronger for the time, leave us the weaker ever after.

Isaiah Walton, a farmer living near Byron, Ga., says he has five married daughters whose aggregate weight is over 1,000 pounds.

Royalty has its drawbacks. Princess Louise of Lorne is just 40, and can't pass herself off for 30; the fact is recorded in all the English almanacs.

A lady who died at Marseilles requested that her heart might be placed in the tomb of her second husband, but her body in her first husband's tomb in America.

The following toast was proposed at a firemen's dinner, and was received with great applause: "The ladies—their eyes kindle the only flame against which there is no insurance."

There are actual landscapes on some of the French brocades imported for evening dress, and a girl condemned to play wall-flower may pass away the time by looking at the pictures on her frock.

Fashion has decreed a new wedding anniversary, the "clover wedding," upon the fourth year of matrimony. The gifts are four-leaved tables, screens, glass dishes, portfolios, frames and other articles with quatrefoil designs.

A Nashville minister is credited with the observation that "the woman who will occupy two seats in a street car, in violation of her neighbor's rights, may be respectable, but can have little claim to either religion or good breeding."

Queen Olga, of Greece, is a most charming woman and is much beloved by her subjects. Her chief pleasure lies in spinning silk and attending to household duties. She can make a last year's bonnet look like a new one by a few hours work.

The woman who shows annoyance at a declaration of love is very near yielding; the one who is silent wants to hear more; the one who weeps wants to be consoled; but the one who laughs disconcerts the attacking party, while she is invulnerable.

Miss Eliza Bliss, of Rehobeth, Conn., invited an applicant for charity into her house the other day. While she was preparing food the tramp sang, "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and at the same time stole the lady's pocketbook and $25 from a bureau drawer."

Mrs. Smith: "I wonder why your friend Jones married that gabbling widow Brown." Mr. Smith: "She is a woman of much ability." Mrs. S.: "Fiddlesticks! In what does she show her ability?" Mr. S.: "She can mind a great many people's business besides her own."

"And whatever you do, Mary Anne," said a loving mother to her nursemaid, as the latter set out in charge of her two little children to walk in the Park on a rainy day, "don't let my darlings sit down on the wet grass. If they are tired and want to rest, you must sit down yourself upon the grass, and let them be on your lap."

Boston mother, to daughter retiring for the night: "Did you eat the cold beans, Penelope, that I put aside for your?" Daughter, hiding her face shyly on her mother's shoulder: "No, mamma: Clarence told me to-night that I am all the world to him, and even beans, mamma, would be in discord with the tranquil harmony that is singing in my soul."

Queen Victoria has fallen into the habit of taking little "cat-naps" in her chair, even when visitors are present. At such times the royal lady goes through the same routine followed by the most humble of her subjects. Her head falls a little forward, swaying slightly from side to side: then she sits bolt upright, opens her eyes very wide, and assumes an appearance of great intelligence and alertness.

"Is there any one living here under 21 years of age?" inquired a man who rang the door bell of a down-town residence the other day. "No, there is not," rather sharply replied a spinster of 38 summers, who answered the ring. "Why, is it possible?" was the reply of the apparently astonished man: "don't you live here?" It was a neat hit, and after a little simpering and a brief chat about the weather the maiden purchased two copies of a work entitled "Hints for the Young."

Masculinities.

To be a philosopher is to be unwise in a business way.

A man doesn't get even when he gets married two times.

Any emperor may be a soldier, but every soldier cannot be an emperor.

The man who would rather be right than be President is often neither.

If you envy a rascal's success you are also a rascal in all save his boldness or shrewdness.

Nothing will make a healthy man tired quicker than reading a long list of rules for good health.

It is one of the peculiarities of things in general that the freshest men generally tell the stalest stories.

A popular dime novelist is said to have slaughtered 18,000,000 Indians in the course of his literary labors.

Said a rich man on the eve of departing this life: "Do not let my son be brought up to sit in a club window."

Medical authority can be found for the declaration that it is the early riser who catches miasmatic troubles where there are any around.

Ingratitude never so thoroughly pierces the human breast as when it proceeds from those in whose behalf we have been guilty of transgressions.

If you would be well with a great mind, leave him with a favorable impression of you; if with a little mind, leave him with a favorable opinion of himself.

The champion meanest man is the husband who placed his pocketbook in a mouse trap, so that his wife could not get it in the early morning without liberating a mouse.

When you play with a child, render it kind service, sensibly increase its pleasure. You confer a present favor, and you do more—you help to form an affectionate spirit.

A new theory is that shaving the beard, if long continued, tends to weaken the hair of the head and cause it to fall out. The increasing number of bald heads has to be accounted for in some way or other.

"Mr. Baskingridge?" said the ticket agent at suburban station: "oh, yes, he's a perfect gentleman—goes in town on the 8.37 train every day. I don't think he's been on the 7.13 once this winter; and as for the 6.50—why, he'd as soon steal chickens as to go on the 6.50."

Said the mistress of a cigar store to a club man: "This is the sixth time you have been here without saying a word about the money you owe me." "Ah, madam," said the clever man, "when I see you I forget everything."

The following advertisement appeared in the columns of a Baltimore daily journal recently: "If father will promise to behave properly, he may return home without fear of being again thrown out of doors by his affectionate daughter Lizzie."

"So you are out of work again?" said the minister, severely. "It seems to me that you get tired of a new employer very quickly." "Don't misrepresent me, sir," replied the man, mildly. "It can never be truthfully said that I get tired first."

A man who possesses every other title to our respect except that of courtesy is in danger of forfeiting them all. A rude manner renders its owner always liable to affront. He is never without dignity who avoids wounding the dignity of others.

William A. Clark, known as "the traveling parson," has been sentenced to the New York penitentiary for one year. He has become known by painting Scriptural quotations on the fences and stones along the highways. He was intrusted with $15 to buy a blackboard and spent the money.

Six months ago a resident of Millersburg, Kentucky, received a pony from a friend living in the Indian Territory, and the story is that, very recently, the animal escaped from his new master, wandered off through several States, swam over a number of rivers, and eventually reached his old home.

"I don't believe in these secret societies," said one city lady to another. "That's very singular," replied the other: "your husband is a Forester, a Knight of Pythias and a Knight of Honor, and you will have at least $10,000 when he dies." "But what good does all that do me," was the tearful response, "when he never dies?" and the poor creature burst into tears.

A Boston paper tells of two shoemakers who formerly did business in Boston. One of them placed this sign over the door: "P. Flaherty, Bootmaker, from Paris." His rival saw that this was a strong card, and determined to play one equally strong if not stronger. So he had a sign put over his door which read as follows. "J. Mahoney, Bootmaker. Never in Paris, but as Good."

"I hope the Colonel didn't seem at all annoyed when you presented him with my account, Penwipe," said Mouldby to his confidential clerk. "Oh, dear! no, sir; he was affable as you please: offered me a cigar and a glass of wine, then he glanced over the bill, nodded his head pleasantly, said 'That will be all right,' rolled it up and lighted his pipe with it," answered Penwipe, chirply.

Among the cases tried at a London police court was that of a woman who would snatch up any very young child whom she saw in the street and hurry with it to a minister to get it christened. She did this on the chance of getting a meal or money, as a starving woman in these circumstances was pretty sure to be considered a "deserving object," and then she took the child back to where she had found it.

A professor of natural history wandered away from the Smithsonian Institution the other day, and got into a lawyer's office in F street, where there is a very pompous young clerk. The professor asked two or three questions on the point at issue, and the clerk finally remarked to him very largely: "I tell you it's true, and it is true. What do you know about law, anyway?" "Nothing, nothing at all," replied the professor meekly; "but I know a great deal about natural history, and I think you are an ass."

Recent Book Issues.

"The Veiled Beyond," deals with theosophy and esoteric Buddhism, and is called a romance of re-incarnation. Its author, a Bostonian, is evidently familiar with these subjects, and he employs them in a story which he tells with a great deal of plausibility, and in a style that will command attention. Those who read simply for entertainment will follow the strange revelations of the tale with quite as much interest as if they were believers in the teachings of Buddha. It is the first of the "Sunshine" series. Published by Cassell & Co., New York.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

American Notes and Queries is the title of a new weekly magazine, the initial number of which has just been issued in this city. It is very similar in appearance to its famous English namesake, and, like it, is to be a "medium of intercommunication for literary men, general readers, etc." It is well edited, and if merit and value go for anything it ought to prove a thorough success. Published at 617 Walnut St., Phila.

The opening article in the *Woman's World* for June is on "The Uses of a Drawing-room." The "Records of a Fallen Dynasty," by Violet Fane, gives some interesting anecdotes in connection with Prince Charles Edward Stuart. This paper is fully illustrated. There is an article called "Something About Needle Women," and Dublin Castle is described. An interesting paper is on "Modern Greek Poets," with portraits of the most important of them. "St. George Chevalier," is a contribution from the pen of the late Dr. Anna Kinsford, and is followed by a paper on "Smocking," which is the name given in England to a certain kind of gather used in women's smock frocks. Mr. Johnston's paper on "Fashions" brings the number to a close. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

Cassell's Family Magazine for June opens with the concluding chapters of "Monica." Following this comes a paper "On Grown-up Babies and other Human Phenomena," illustrated. Phyllis Browne has a third paper on "Hours in My Laundry," which is full of practical advice. "How to Make Conversation," by J. Bibby, was awarded the prize offered for the best paper on this subject. Another practical paper is "How we Girls Earned Our Living," which is followed by one equally practical on "The Art of Fish Cookery." The picturesque follows the practical, and we are given a capital account of an outing "On a Surrey Common." The author of "How to be Happy Though Married," gives the first paper in a series on "The Love Affairs of Some Famous Men." There are several good stories, long and short, and an abundance of poetry, etc. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

The Popular Science Monthly again offers in its June number a list of subjects and articles which will command, as they deserve, the attention of intelligent and thoughtful readers. The opening article on "The Surplus Revenue," is by the eminent economist, Edward Atkinson. Another economical article is on "The Philosophy of Commercial Depression." A third paper in the same line is that on "The Earned Decrease vs. the Unearned Increment. One of the most potent documents for temperance ever published is "The Effects of Moderate Drinking." The second article on "Darwinism and the Christian Faith" is given. A new view of the questions involved in children's work in factories, etc., is well put in "Education and Employment of Children." Mr. Spencer makes an incisive answer to the Duke of Argyll's criticisms of his views, which were published in the May number. "The Imitative Faculty of Infants;" a copiously illustrated article on "Whistles Ancient and Modern," "The Study of a Candle," and other articles are likewise valuable and interesting.

CHEWING-GUM.—Who would think that over a million of dollars a year are spent here in America for chewing-gum? It is a good deal of money to put out in the indulgence of a habit which some regard as positively shocking, and which is at any rate a luxurious practice, and one which most boys and girls outgrow as soon as they perceive it is not accordant with the best of manners. The custom, however, has prevailed here ever since the Indians took the spruce gum from the trees and taught the white man to roll it in his mouth. And the desire to chew something seems to prevail in other quarters of the globe, for the Chinese chew a pungent bean, and the Turks and other Eastern races use beeswax. The manufacture of chewing-gum has become quite an industry. In Brooklyn one large six-story building is devoted to this purpose, and the processes of production closely guarded lest the secrets respecting the mixtures should be disclosed.

MAKE not thy friends too cheap to thee, nor thyself to thy friends.

You Can't Read This

without wishing to investigate, if you are wise. Send your address to Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine, and you will receive free, full information about work that you can do and live at home, wherever you are located, at which you can earn from $5 to $25 and upwards daily. Some have earned over $50 in a day. Capital not required; you are started free. All is new. Both sexes; all ages. Snug little fortunes await all workers.

The Compass Needle.

BY J. CAMPBELL.

GOLD has been found in various parts of Transvaal, Africa, for some time now, indeed, according to some authorities, the northern districts of country supplied the greater portion of the gold with which Solomon adorned his wondrous Temple, and of which the fair Queen of Sheba made such lavish use.

Whether this be so or not, matters little for the purpose of this relation.

Nowadays, the gold-bearing district is in the hands of concessionaires, who work upon a principle that does away with the romance that usually hung around the life of a gold-digger in the old time. The incident about to be related took place ten years since; the exact locality it is unnecessary to fix upon.

Jasper Hillary had not been over-well treated by the fickel goodess at any period of his career, the last year or two of which he had spent upon the Diamond fields in the neighboring province of Griqualand; and although a hard and energetic worker, luck seemed to have made a dead set against him, so he had returned again to the scene of his earlier efforts as a digger; and with a shade of better luck pegged out his claim on Antbear creek; and having successfully applied for water-rights, and had brought in water from a distance of over two miles, and began work with a decided improvement in his prospects.

Most of the diggers were having a 'good time' of it in their claims, and a few grumblers were to be found; and but for the doubtful character of one or two individuals, whose mysterious habits formed a constant topic of speculation among the diggers all seemed to be going as merry as marriage-bells.

The individuals alluded to were men of a decided nationality, sleek and well fed in appearance, but with a tendency to commune with the native 'boys,' (a term in general use in the South Africa colonies, signify servant) savored of something other than the mere desire to learn the lingo, or study habits and customs.

One day, Hillary, whose claim had been turning a fairly level yield of good, came up to the hotel—where some six or seven of us were lounging over our pipes, preparatory to 'turning to' again for the afternoon's spell of work—his face wearing a somewhat angry and puzzled look, and addressed us after the following strain:

"Look here! My luck's run out or there is some thieving going on among my 'boys.'"

"What's up, old man? What's wrong?" asked Drake.

"Just this: I 'cleaned up' this morning, and I didn't get a bit of gold larger than a pea. Now, all along, as I worked up my ground, the gold has been getting heavier. it has been coarsish all through; but just where I expected to get the heaviest, it has dwindled down to dust, and shotty bits. There's something wrong, and I am going to puzzle it out. By-the-bye, I daresay you'll agree with me that it is a queer thing that those 'shiny gents'—here he pointed in the direction of the tent occupied by the men of decided nationality—'should be over at Hermit's—at the bank—paying in gold. Yes, that's so. Mike Bruty saw 'em; he told me so himself."

"Have they got licenses?" asked Drake.

"O yes. I've found that's all right; they are 'cute enough for that."

"What are you going to do, eh, Jasper?"

"Well I'm going to watch my 'boys' a bit first. There's one among 'em I'm not very sweet upon. If I find him as tricky at his work this week as he has been, I'll lay a trap for him; and you fellows shall come up and see how it works the next time I clean up, which wont be before next week."

Soon after this, it came to Hillary's knowledge that this 'boy' of his, of whom he had expressed himself so dubious, had been seen in the bush some little distance from the camp in close conversation with one of the shiny gentry; and this led Hillary to come to the conclusion that the 'boy' was playing him false; so he at once determined to put him to the test. On the Saturday following the day on which he arranged to clean up his sluice-box, this doubtful 'boy' was set to work at the head of the box where the pay-dirt was being shoveled in; and at this comparatively isolated work it was an easy matter to watch him.

As soon as the pay gravel is shovelled into a sluice-box, the water rushing through carries away all the stones and sand over the ripples at the lower end of the box, and whatever light gold is carried with it, sinks, and becomes lodged in between the ripples or stones with which the box is paved. All the coarser specks and nuggets remain at the head of the box where it was first dropped in with the gravel, the superior gravity of the metal preventing the weaker force of the water from carrying it away.

Thus, any one at the head of the box seeing anything like stoppage in the smooth flow of the water, becomes aware that a piece of heavy gold is at the bottom; and if the worker ceases to put in more gravel, the water becomes clear enough to enable him to see the gold.

So, then, this doubtful 'boy' was set to the work of feeding the box; and towards the close of the operations, Hillary placed a nugget of about an ounce in such a position in the heap of gravel that the 'boy' was bound to see it.

As Hillary expected, the native did see it; and looking cautiously around to see that no one was watching, he carefully appropriated the nugget, and placing it in the folds at the bottom of his trousers-leg, which, as usual, was rolled up—the garment in question being something too long for him proceeded to finish up the heap of gravel.

Hillary had been carefully watching for this, and having seen the whole performance, came away satisfied that he had the culprit save in his keeping.

After the cleaning up was over, and the 'boys' had gone though the business of washing themselves and preparing for the rest usually accorded them after 2 o'clock on Saturdays, Hillary sent word to us to the effect that if we wanted to see the fun, we were to go round to his hut at once. We found him sitting on the rock with about a dozen 'boys' around him waiting to receive their week's wages.

After our arrival Hillary addressed them in their own language, of which he was a fairly good master, telling them how his yield of gold had fallen off, and that there is no reason why it should have done so, as the 'white boss' ahead of him was finding well; that he was quite sure some one was robbing him, and that it must be one or more among themselves.

Of course their protestations to the contrary were both loud and vehement avowing, as natives generally do, that he was too good a boss to be robbed, and that they would assegai the man who could do so.

"Very well, then," said Hillary; "if you are all innocent, you will all consent to stand the trial which I shall give you.—Now look here"—here he pulled a small pocket-compass out of his wallet, and showing it to them, explained that the Spirit that made the needle inside shake about would presently become aware as to who the thief was; would then remain quite still, pointing to the guilty man.

This seemed to tickle their fancies, though we rather thought, other than its being likely to prove an amusement to them, they had but little faith in its powers of divination.

Hillary then placed them in a circle around him, at distances of about two yards apart, taking care to place the man he knew to be guilty as due north as possible. Then telling them again that the spirit never made a mistake, and that whoever the needle pointed to was to be shot, then without any more palaver took his rifle, and placing the compass on the ground in the centre of the group, stood on one side.

It was amusing to watch the varying expressions upon the faces of the 'boys' standing around—from the moment the compass was set on the ground, when the needle spun around with rapid vibrations, until the gradual and final decline to stationary—expressions of wonder, mirth, incredulity gradually deepened into fear as the oscillations of the needle became weaker and weaker; and when it finally came to a stand, pointing to the guilty one, he, with a yell of dismay and an unnatural pallor upon him—I have seen a native go all but white—turned and fled, those remaining dropped to their haunches as Hillary with levelled rifle stood laughing at the success of his plan. Hillary had forgotten that he had eased the pull of his weapon a day or two before, and although he had no intention of taking life at the beginning, felt a kind of satisfaction as he drew the bead upon the retreating form.

Be that as it may, the excitement had no doubt wrought upon his nervous system; the lightened trigger yielded under the trembling fingure, a report followed, simultaneous with which the flying Kaffir, gave one spring into the air and fell dead on the hillside, along which he had been speeding but a moment before.

The authorities made it too warm for Hillary who had to clear out. He eventually gave himself up, was placed in the jail; and after being incarcerated in this building, made of watties, daubed with mud on the outside, minus a door, for a whole week, the diggers became impatient that one of their number should suffer such indignity "all about a thief of a nigger." They took upon themselves to effect his release: and escorting him over the border, parted from him full of regrets that the law of the land made it necessary for him to absent himself, at any rate for a time, from among them.

He got a rattling good price for his claim, and the purchaser did not lose on his bargain; but the lesson upon the 'boys' who were working on the creek wrought an immense amount of good; and what was better, the shiny gentry deemed it advisable to discontinue their evangelising among natives employed by diggers.

MEDICINE IN HEATHENDOM.

In Heathendom the densest ignorance as to the cause, prevention, and cure of disease prevails. In India and Africa, a close connection is established between religion and medicine. Sickness is a punishment sent by the gods or by evil spirits; and it will be followed by death, if propitiation is not made to the offended deities. The Chinese are a little more enlightened. They have a medical literature of a kind; but they know nothing about even the elementary principles of anatomy and physiology. A Chinaman who wishes to become a doctor does not go through any training or spend money in buying a practice; he has only to purchase a pair of spectacles, and gather some herbs, a few spiders and some snakes, which he places in bottles in the window of his shop. The bottles are his advertisement; they tell all who are in need of healing to come to him. His usual prescription is a horrible pill, compounded of parts of snake, wasps, centipedes, toads, and scorpions, ground small and mixed with honey.

Another pill, supposed to be of extraordinary efficacy in cases of extreme weakness, is made of the bones of tigers. The belief in its merit is based on this strange piece of reasoning: "The tiger is very strong; the bone is the strongest part of the strong animal—therefore, a pill of this must be pre-eminently strengenthing."

The facts speak eloquently as to the state of medical science in China. The lamentable consequence is an excessive mortality. It is calculated that thirty-three thousand die daily, and this number is of course largely increased during an epidemic which is no uncommon visitor.

The Siamese believe that the human body is composed of four elements—fire, earth, wind and water. They divide the body into thirty-two parts, and teach that it is subject to ninety-six diseases, caused by the disturbance of the elements which enter into its composition. Fevers are traced to an undue proportion of fire. The wind is a fertile source of ailments. If you ask a native what is wrong with him, the chances are ten to one he will reply "Wind.

In Southern India, festivals are observed at which sacrifices of sheep, goats, and fowls are offered to Siva to avert sickness. Another festival is held by convalescent invalids, who seek to fulfil their vows. It is attended by scenes disgusting beyond conception.

Some of the tribes in Central Africa have male and female doctors. The women play the largest part in the ministry of healing; the activity of the men is confined to the treatment of wounds and snake bites. They handle a broken arm or leg in a curious fashion: if it is a simple fracture, the limb is pulled straight; if it is broken in pieces, some small cuts are made in the flesh, and as soon as the swelling is reduced, if the limb cannot be straightened, the broken bones are pulled out and a powdered root is applied to the wound.

The woman-doctor puts great faith in magic. When she goes to see a patient she takes with her a basket containing what she is pleased to call a magic wand, but what is in reality a double tube, nearly a foot long. One tube is filled with small stones; the other is empty. She waves the wand over the sick person, to begin with; she then places it over the part in which pain is felt. After going through some manipulatory tricks, she professes to draw the disease out in a tangible form; but she is always cautious enough to conceal it from the patient.

If the natives of the Friendly Islands suffer from a spreading ulceration, they have the limb cut off with a sharp shell. The excruciating agony of such an operation can be better imagined than described. Should a man go mad, he is invariably buried alive.

In the South Pfiscle Islands, a free incision is the panacea for all the ills flesh is heir to. Wherever pain is felt, a cut is made as the natives simply put it, "to let the pain out."

LYING IN THE FAR WEST.—In Central Dakota there exists one of Nature's strangest freaks in the shape of a flock of twenty snakes trained to a remarkable degree of proficiency. At the blast of a whistle the snakes assemble on the banks of the creek. The leader dashes into the water of the creek, leaving only the extremity of its tail on the bank. Another snake immediately grasps the end of the leader's tail in his jaws, a third takes hold of the second snake's tail in a similar manner, and so on, extending to the water troughs in the cattle yards, three hundred feet away.

The leading snake begins to swallow or pump the water of the creek, which passes through the long line of snakes as it would through a hose, and falls in a heavy stream into the trough. The agriculturist who owns them told of an extraordinary circumstance which occurred a short time ago. While working in a field near his home he observed flames issuing from the roof of his barn.

In despair he gazed on the work of destruction; suddenly he heard a loud rustling in the tall grass, whence issued his herd of snakes. The leader buried himself into the creek, the rest instantly adjusting themselves, heads and tails, from the creek to the burning building.

The last snake, standing on its head, waved its long, flexible body, from the tail of which issued a stream of water that was thrown with terrific force on the burning building. With fifteen minutes the last spark was out.

THE most truly religious thing that a man can do is to fight his way through habits and deficiencies, and back to pure manlike elements of his nature, which are the ineffaceable traces of the Divine workmanship, and alone really worth fighting for.

AIM at perfection in everything, though in most things it is unattainable; however, they who aim at it, and persevere, will come much nearer to it than those whose laziness and despondency make them give it up as unattainable.

THE desire to say some great thing has prevented the utterance of many a wholesome word; and anxiety to accomplish some wonderful work has crushed in the bud many a humble deed of exceeding grace and sweetness.

FANATICISM is a fire, which heats the mind indeed, but heats without purifying. It stimulates and ferments all the passions, but it rectifies none of them.

For beauty, for comfort, for improvement of the complexion, use only Poxzoni's Powder; there is nothing equal to it.

Humorous.

THE MODERN STYLE.

I wooed her long, as lovers do,
With sigh and verse and billet,
Told how my life would be a blank,
Without her love to fill it.
I told her how my throbbing heart
Was aching fit to crack it;
She tittered when I pressed her hand,
And cried, "O, cheese the racket!"

I took her oft to eat ice cream,
I fed her tons of candy,
And thought at last I'd touched her heart
When she said, "You're a dandy!"
But when I tried to speak of love,
How I was almost crazy,
She gayly slapped me with my glove,
And warbled, "You're a daisy!"

I changed my tactics then, and told
Of houses, bonds and land;
Of how in gold my father rolled,
With servants at command.
I told her she should be a queen,
And move among the ton;
Her head sank gently on my breast,
She faltered, "I catch on."

—U. N. Nonsense.

A good old age—Marriage.

Light work—Making candles.

A marine delicacy—Ocean currents.

Mocking birds—Lean chickens for dinner.

Before arithmetic was invented people multiplied on the face of the earth.

The barber's is a strange profession. You seldom see one that is not at the head.

A doctor who understands only one language may yet be familiar with a great many tongues.

When a cat gives an entertainment from the top of a wall, it isn't the cat we object to, it's the waul.

"Pa," said a little fellow to his unshaved father, "your chin looks like the wheel in the musical box."

A bright scholar in a New York school recently stated in a composition that doughnuts were first made in Greece.

Medical experts have now discovered tyrotoxicon in milk. It must be cheaper than water, or else it got in my accident.

"Mister, I say, I don't suppose you don't know of nobody who don't want to hire nobody to do nothing, don't you?" The answer was: "Yes, I don't."

The tenor in a fashionable church choir found to his horror that his voice all at once had become unpleasantly thick. He strained it, but without any good effect.

It is the opportunity that makes the man, after all. A fellow out West who nearly starved to death as a member of an opera troupe, is now coining money peddling clams.

Little 3-year-old Arthur was pulling the cat's tail, when a gentleman visitor said: "You mustn't do that; she will bite." To this he replied: "Cats don't bite at this end."

Fond mother, excitedly: "Sakes 'live, chile, yo' brudder's gone to dat dar dance at Johnsing's an' he'll nebber come back no mosh!" "Why not?" "He's done gone forgot to take his razzer wid him."

The women are smarter than the men, say what you will. The women do not leave their money in sample-rooms. When they go sampling they operate with distinguished success and without the expenditure of a cent.

Sweet boy visitor: "Where is the cat and dog, Mrs. Blanck?" "We haven't any, my dear." "That's funny." "Why is it funny, pet?" "'Cause mamma said you and Mr. Blanck lived a perfect cat and dog life."

He, making a long call: "What a very odd-looking clock, Miss Smith! Is it an heirloom?" She, suppressing a yawn: "Oh, no! It is a recent purchase of papa's. He has a penchant for such things. I was about to call your attention to it."

"You wouldn't think," he said, indicating a gentleman across the street, "that that ordinary, commonplace-looking man has many times stared death unflinchingly in the face." "Why, no! Is he a desperate character?" "Not very; he's an undertaker."

"Miss Kacktus," said a young man at an Arizona ball, casually resting his hand on the butt end of his six-shooter, "I believe the next waltz is mine, isn't it?" "I think you are mistaken, Mr. Roundup," said another young man who was standing by, as he pointed in a careless, easy manner at Miss Kacktus' card with a bowie knife 18 inches long, "my name is down for that waltz." "You are right, Mr. Lariat," rejoined Mr. Roundup, with his eyes on the glittering blade.

A young lady was passing a residence on Walnut street, one morning last winter, on whose steps was a young man and in front of which was a dog. In a flash her feet went from under her, and she went down on the icy walk. The dog, in a playful mood, rushed to her assistance, while the young man, not at all embarrassed, asked: "Did you fall?" "Well, I should think I did!" said the young lady, rising and re-arranging her head-gear. "Yes," responded the youth; "I thought it must be funny if you sat down to play with the dog."

She was a woe maiden of three summers, accustomed to the simplicity of the nursery table, and with a taste unvitiated by the use of spices. She was allowed the other day to come to the family table, where she was especially interested in the mystery of the pepper-box, an article which had apparently never before come within the limits of her observation. She watched with close attention while her papa peppered something, and then with the utmost gravity and politeness she extended her plate, saying: "Please put a little dirt on mine, too, papa."

BEAUTY'S STRUGGLE.

The struggles of the human race, especially the female portion, after beauty are as earnest and as frequent as the struggles after liberty.

The savage tribe in which flat heads are fashionable spares no effort to squeeze and contort the heads of children into the desired shape.

Among Africans a prominent nose is an abomination, and the youthful African has his nose squeezed in youth. The lower lip again is not beautiful unless it drops and exhibits the roots of the teeth; and to make it droop it has to be constantly dragged down in childhood.

Among the Greek ladies, as among the Mexican, a high forehead was not considered beautiful, and they used oils and balms to make the hair grow; while the country women of Montaigne plucked the hairs from the upper part of the forehead to make it appear high.

In Italy, in the fifteenth century, it was considered a mark of beauty to have very light eyebrows; the consequence was that the ladies used to pluck out the hairs. In the pictures of the great Italian painters of this period the eyebrows may be noticed to be very thin—e.g., the "St. Catherine" of Raphael and many of the saints in the National Gallery.

At another time it was the fashion to cultivate the eyebrows, and ladies then endeavoured to make them meet.

It is natural that the greatest efforts of those in search of beauty should be expended upon the face. The Roman lady covered her face with a thick paste when she was at home, so as to preserve her skin. Nero's wife, Poppæa, used a preparation of asses' milk; she used also to bathe in asses' milk, thinking that it made her skin white. This Empress thus consumed daily upon her person the milk of five hundred asses.

With regard to paint, the Roman women are said to have used it as early as 200 B. C. For whitening the skin they applied white lead and chalk, and for reddening the cheeks, vermilion.

They painted the edges of the eyelids and the eyebrows with a black powder. The Athenian women acted pretty much in the same way.

Home.—Best of all things to us is home. In hours of ambition and pleasure we may sometimes forget its exquisite sweetness, but let sickness or sadness come, and we return to it at once. Let the hollow hearts that feign a friendship which they do not feel stand revealed before us—let us know, as we all must at moments, that however important we may be in our own estimation, our places would be filled at an hour's notice should we die to-morrow; then we whisper to ourselves the magic word, "Home!" and are comforted.

"Home, sweet home!" It does not matter how humble it is, nor is it less a home for being a place. It is where those we love dwell—wherever that may be—where we are valued for ourselves and are in ourselves and are held in esteem because of what we are in ourselves, and not because of power, or wealth, or what we can do for other people.

Who would be without a home! Who would take the world's applause and honor in place of the tenderness of a few true hearts and the cosy fireside meetings where the truth may be spoken without disguise, and envious carpings are unknown? In life's battle, even the hero finds many enemies, and much abuse and slander and detraction; but into a home, if it is what it ought to be, these things never find their way. There, to his wife, the plainest man becomes, or should become, a wonderful thing—a sage, a man who ought to be President. M. S.

The Safest Place.—"A curious sight was to see lately during the rain a wet umbrella leaning against the wall outside a railroad office in Boston. A country visitor did not wish to carry the dripping head protector within the precincts of the office, and there it remained for fully a half hour without molestation. Hundreds were the curious glances cast at the tempting article, and occasionally some pedestrian unsupplied with such protection would advance a step or two toward it, but would then draw back and go his way, evidently thinking it was a trap. Had the countryman left it inside the door or in any less prominent place it would undoubtedly have disappeared almost immediately upon leaving his hand, but there it was secure, and has probably settled the vexed question as to the safest place to leave an umbrella.

A Foolish "Fad."—There is a story going the rounds that "silly mothers in the fashionable circles of Paris have aroused the indignation of the medical profession by applying the horrors of face painting to little children.

"In the public gardens babies of three years old may be seen whose eyebrows have been blackened or dyed. Other anxious parents, distressed at the vulgarly ruddy and rustic hue of their children's cheeks, carefully powder them before sending them out. Little coquettes of ten years are not permitted to go abroad until the regulation black stroke has been painted beneath their eyes.

"The doctors warn the mothers that when the children thus barbarously treated reach the age of 16 they will have a colorless and ruined complexion, to say nothing of the injury to health."

The virtue of Paganism was strength, the virtue of Christianity is obedience.

We are ruined, not by what we really want, but by what we think we do; therefore, never go abroad in search of your wants; if they be real wants, they will come home in search of you; for he that buys what he does not will soon want what he cannot buy.

Wonder, connected with a principle of rational curiosity, is the source of all knowledge and discovery, and it is a principle even of piety; but wonder which ends in wonder, and is satisfied with wonder, is the quality of an idiot.

There are six faults which one ought to avoid; the desire of riches, drowsiness, sloth, idleness, fear, and anger.

Know all men
Ye Phenoe Sonique
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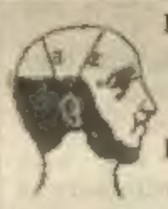

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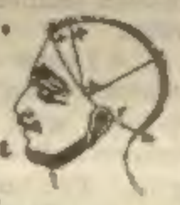

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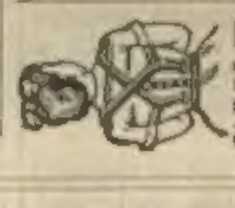

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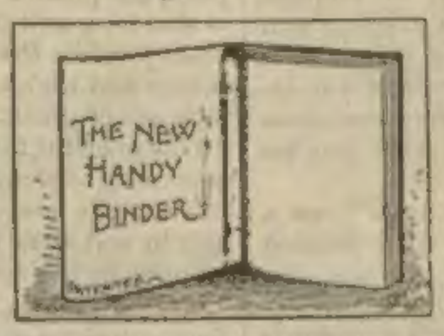

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The Empire style of dress is rapidly gaining ground; there is no doubt of it, and we shall probably wind up the century dressed in our great grand-mother's costumes. Little by little we are accepting dresses of the *Premier Empire*. Truly may we say that the stage rules fashions. Paris rules the fashions of the civilized world; the stage rules Paris, *i.e.*, the stage rules us wheresoever we may be, though it is not our own stage.

Certainly Empire dresses have a great charm, a charm all their own: and they are much more economical than the triple skirts, draped and re-draped, taking yards upon yards of material. What is more simple, more convenient than the skirt hardly sustained at the back, with its little Recamier corsage finished with a sash, tying at the side or at the back?

The style is not yet general, but it promises to become so, and if many ladies shrink from adopting the entire dress, they nevertheless wear with pleasure the round-waisted Empire corsage, with its pretty pleated fronts draped *en fichu* across each other, models which are so becoming to the slenderness of youth. There is that about Empire dresses and bodices which makes them unfit for maturity.

An Empire corsage of point d'esprit tulle has finely pleated tulle draped across a plastron of black velvet, embroidered with beads of cashmere colors encircles the neck and descends on the pleats of the tulle, terminating in a graceful curve. On the left curve there is hung a tassel of many colored silk and beads. A beaded belt encircles the waist, with similar curved bands below terminating on the tulle tablier, the left curve again having a tassle to finish it.

Empire dresses have revived old world brocades (silk or wollen), and those ladies who possess rich stuffs, bought by their great-grandmothers, may wear them now suitably made up. Gauzy fabrics and brocades of large pattern divide the palm for Empire dresses and mantles. Young girls and young unmarried ladies are going over to the Empire style *en masse*, and therefore we may expect the sale of the lovely new gauzes and muslins to go up considerably.

Plain, embroidered, striped with straight or waving lines of ribbon, metal threads, silken threads, gauzes and silk muslins vie with each other in beauty and lend themselves equally to the full, slightly draped Empire skirts, and those pleated up and draped with long flowing bows and festoons of moire ribbon.

Ribbons of all materials, patterns and sizes are immensely used for ball dresses; they are frequently of a totally different color to the rest of the dress. For instance, red and pink toilettes are trimmed with light moss-green ribbons; blue with straw, mauve with narrow ribbons of many colors—blue, pink, straw, moss, almond, apricot, etc.

White materials embroidered with gold are in high favor for evening wear, whether wool or silk. Artistically draped tabliers of white crepe de Chine are edged with a deep band of gold embroidery, the belt to the draped Empire corsage being covered with embroidery.

The daisy has quite gone out of fashion, but leaves, mosses, hyacinths, roses and camellias are worn in great numbers. The Empire skirt are frequently edged with a garland of flowers, and sprays or boquets of large sizes are employed in draping and garnishing evening skirts and corsages of more elaborate make. If there is in it an error at all, it inclines to an over-abundance of flowers, and a tendency to wear flowers of a very large size.

A prettily draped dinner toilette is of a delicate mauve sicilienne, with pleated skirt of sicilienne and tablier of white embroidered silk muslin. The sicilienne tunic is very pretty, widely open towards the left, and gracefully looped on the right. The Sicilienne corsage has a pointed plastron and sleeves of the embroidery lined with mauve silk. The back drapery is partly hung from the back point of the corsage. A collar and cuffs of embroidery complete the dress.

A reception toilette, that is very notable, can be employed as a dinner dress, for it is made of very rich material. The open redingote is of vert d'eau faille with ornamental satin stripes figured with darker velvet designs. This is edged up the fronts with long shaped lace revers lined with plain velvet. The space in front is filled in with full suit vert d'eau silk, pinked out at the edge, secured at the waist and near the knees with voluminous ruches of the same satin pinked out at the edge.

One pretty walking dress is elegant, but by no means elaborate. The skirt is of brown velvet with long tunic of striped beaver-dyed woollen, looped to form puffs on the hips. The corsage has very short basques in front and at the sides, and pleated tails at the back. In front is a plastron of velvet secured to the pekin with small buttons. The full sleeves have wide paraments of velvet.

Tulle seems to be the favorite chapeau material, trimmed with ribbon, flowers, feathers, etc. Chapeaux of small size are covered with pleated or bouillonne tulle, trimmed in front with bow of moire ribbon. One model has two black glistening wings placed on each side of the bow their points joining in front, behind them being a small many-looped bow of gold braid. Another, with Mary Stuart brim, is trimmed with a coronet of roses.

The Tosca hat has been adopted by young elegantes, only the form is slightly modified, and they do not wear it tilted back, but well on the head.

Shot ribbons are the rage for chapeaux, in every combination of color. Straw chapeaux are being made in two colors to go with them, the brim being one color, the crown another.

A capote of black lace, embroidered with gold thread, has a brim of red velvet fluted in front, and red velvet strings starting from the back and tying under the chin. On the top is a handsome plume of red ostrich feather tips with a tall black aigrette.

The Leonie chapeau is a capote with high conical crown flattened at the sides. It is covered with Nile-green faille, slightly draped and embroidered at the edge with gold. The brim, covered with narrow pleatings of faille, is liberally ornamented with gold braid loops. A ruche of cream velvet separates crown and brim, the ruche being decorated with gold pendants.

In front is a bunch of corn-ears, the spines of which are gilded. The inside of the brim is filled with loops of gold braids and ruche cream velvet. The strings are of faille matching the capote; they tie under the chin.

A pretty summerlike model, fit for brighter weather, is covered with cream lace laid over crevette faille. The bouillonne brim is of crevette faille ornamented with a lofty bow with pennon ends of cream satin. Pleatings of cream satin hook beneath the chin the junction being hidden beneath a bow of cream ribbon.

A new style of chapeau for young ladies is made of straw, and is not unlike the chimney-pot hat, which, in silk, they wear for riding. A model is in nut-brown straw, the brim lined with velvet to match. In front is a drapery of darker velvet, with two large wings.

There is a great variety of style in draped polonaises, so much indeed, that it is only possible to refer to one good model amongst many this particular costume is a visiting dress for a young lady, designed by Pingat and carried out in Gobelin blue plush and woilen material to match. The skirt is formed of a series of wide panels of plush, divided by fan pleatings of woolen material.

The polonaise is also of this fabric; it fastens on the left side of the throat under a few pleats; the material falls straight down the left side in easy folds, and terminates in a deep rounded panier on the right side The front and edge of this panier are bordered with large passementerie drops. The sides and back are tight fitting; on the left side of the skirt is a long, full, pointed drapery; the pleated and puffed black drapery is also long and full, and caught up immediately below the waist. The plain paraments and high collar, fastened on the left side are of plush.

This graceful, full-fronted polonaise is very becoming to slender figures, and very similar models are made in crepe de Chine, and in soft silks for evening wear, when an open or low bodice is not required.

A charming model for this purpose is a long polonaise of Pompadour peau de soie on a pale-pink ground. The polonaise is draped from the shoulders, and fastened diagonally from the right shoulder to the left hip: the fronts open here over a lace skirt mounted on a pink satin foundation skirt bordered with a pleating.

Odds and Ends.

CONCERNING REFRESHMENTS.

All receptions, large and small, are designated nowadays "At Homes." Mrs. So-and-So is "At home" for dancing, music, or theatricals.

One would suppose that at these big "At Home" the refreshments would be on the same scale as the hostess' visiting list; but such is not always the case.

At some houses one finds a ridiculously gorgeous supper, at other so scant is the supply that, unless fortunate enough to enter the supper room among the first, it is well-night hopeless to secure even a tiny sandwich.

A sandwich supper is really quite sufficient for a small At Home. But the sandwiches ought to be many and good. As regards quantity, an average of four per head, and a few over, is a safe plan; but there is a good deal to be said on the score of quality.

The first consideration is the bread. A loaf (double size) is the best of ordinary bread; but some bakers make a Vienna sandwich loaf, which is close, firm, and yet moist. Of course, it must be used stale.

Then a sandwich ought to be neither too small nor too big; neither coarsely large or ridiculously small. A triangle of 3½ inches is a nice size. Butter the bread carefully with the best fresh butter, if in cold weather slightly warming it. Press the sandwich well together with the hand before dividing it.

When all are ready, pile them neatly in the dishes; garnish with parsley or watercress and put the dishes closely together on a large tray; dip a clean cloth in water, wring it out tightly, shake it, and throw over the dishes. This will keep the sandwiches moist for hours, and should only be removed about half an hour before they are required, when the dishes can be put in the places left for them on the supper table.

Potted meats, rolled tongue, or ham cut very thin, and in small pieces, with a very little touch of mustard make excellent sandwiches.

Tinned salmon sandwiches, if properly made always meet with great approval, and have the charm of novelty. Procure a good brand of salmon, drain off the liquor, turn the contents of the tin into a mortar; add a small lump of butter and a little pepper and salt. Pound it well and spread it over the buttered bread.

Dried cod's roe, skinned and pounded with a little butter and pepper, is also very nice.

A good sandwich, and one usually liked, is made as follows: Spread some anchovy paste very thinly over brown bread and butter, then sprinkle with finely chopped mustard and cress and watercress.

Another is made also of brown bread, with first a sprinkling of the chopped cress, etc., and then some grated Parmesan cheese.

Nice little cakes for supper are Victoria sandwiches, or Genoise pastry. Take the weight of three eggs in butter flour and castor sugar. Work the butter and sugar together; add the flour gradually, and a teaspoonful of baking powder, then the three well-beaten eggs. Beat well for some minutes; put the mixture in a buttered tin, or soup plates, and bake at once.

The cake should not be more than a quarter of an inch thick when baked. Whilst still warm, divide it, and spread jam on one half; place the other half over it.

Make a little icing with the white of an egg whisked to a stiff froth, and about ¼lb. of castor sugar. Use some it white, and color the rest with a drop or two of cochineal; spread it thinly and evenly.

Chocolate icing can be made by grating some chocolate into a small earthenware basin, mixing with it a very little water, stirring it over the fire until it boils up once or twice, and continuing the stirring off the fire until it looks glazed, then spreading it over the cakes. Stand in the oven for a few minutes to dry the icing. Cut the cakes into fancy shapes. Arrange them prettily on the dishes.

Some currant and plain cake should always find a place on the supper table, cut in small pieces, and piled on flat dishes.

Sponge Cake.—Four eggs, their weight in castor sugar and the weight of two in flour; beat the eggs with the sugar for ten minutes, add the flour gradually, a little lemon juice, and a teaspoonful of baking powder dissolved in a little water; beat well, put in a buttered tin and bake for half an hour.

A NATURAL INQUIRY.—A certain wag, strolling about and seeing what was to be seen, noticed by the side of the door of a large mansion, right under the bell, the words—"Please ring the bell." After reflecting a few minutes, he walked up and gave the bell such a pull that one might have supposed he was trying to extricate it by the roots. In a few minutes an angry-faced man tore the door open.

"Do you live here?" he was asked.

"Yes; what do you want?"

"I saw that notice, 'Please ring the bell,' so I rang it; and now I want to know why you can't ring the bell yourself?"

An evil intention perverts the best actions and makes them sins.

Confidential Correspondents.

DECK.—Steerage passengers on ocean steamers have not the privilege of the upper deck.

D. B. M.—You could ascertain if the engraving is still in print by inquiring at some large picture store. Forward a postal directed to yourself and we will give the names of several firms. We do not publish addresses of business houses in this column.

PRETEXT.—"Salad Days" are days of inexperience when persons are very green. You will find the expression in Shakspeare's "Antony and Cleopatra:"

> My salad days
> When I was green in judgment.

D. J. C.—There is no gibbetting in this country. It was the custom up till within little more than fifty years in England to hang persons who had committed particularly atrocious murders in chains on a gibbet. The place chosen was usually near the scene of the crime, and the spot was thus made doubly hideous. The practice there was abolished during the reign of William IV.

PRIGGLE.—You seem to be suffering from the very prevalent disease of self-consciousness. There are some men with excitable nervous systems, to whom such attempts at public speaking as you make are productive of positive harm. You write sensibly; but we should advise you not to further strain an excitable nervous system, but to abandon your efforts at oratory.

JACK.—We should imagine that the young lady you speak of is not only indifferent to your addresses, but positively declines them. It may be true that "faint heart never won fair lady," but it would be very ungentlemanly to force your attentions on her when she so plainly shows that she does not wish for them. Your best plan is to make a formal proposal, and if she refuses, your only course is to submit to her decision.

SWEETHEART.—You appear to have used the young man very badly. No wonder he has turned upon you, as you say, and is vexed and hurt. If you really love him, you will not let your pride stand in the way of your affection. There is nothing to be ashamed of in owning a fault, and you have been very much in the wrong by your own showing. If you really wish to have nothing more to do with him, tell him so openly, and end the engagement at once.

STRICT.—Neither cards nor any game of skill or chance is wrong in itself; it is the uses they are put to that make them mischievous. It is not well for boys and girls to get into the habit of card playing in their leisure time; young folks at school have plenty else to do, and good, honest, childish play and exercise are far better than cards. All the time that can be afforded from school duties should be spent in out-door games when the weather will permit.

LEWIS.—Plush spotted by rain has probably been dressed or dyed in a special manner. The only way to remove the spots would be to wet the piece all over and dry with the usual precautions—i. e., without wringing, creasing, or folding. Superfluous moisture should be removed by hanging up and allowing to drain. When nearly dry, frequent shaking will be required. The drying should be finished off quickly before a fire. This method will probably alter the appearance, but the alteration will be uniform.

GRAPH.—A copying pad can be easily and inexpensively made in the following manner: Soak two ounces of Russian glue for four or five hours in water; then melt over a slow fire, adding while it is gradually melting eight ounces of glycerine, a few drops of carbolic acid, and to whiten it a small quantity of whiting. It should be kept well stirred, and finally poured into a tin tray; when it is quite cold and solid it is ready for use. The bottom of the tin should be perfectly level, so that the pad may be of one thickness all through and even. The ink to use can be bought cheaper than it can be made, and is sold at all stationers' shops.

EVELYN.—The one who is in the wrong should speak first; but inasmuch as both may think themselves in the right, and each may think the other wrong (which is too often the case between lovers), the conciliatory part may be acted by yourself in a graceful manner. There is no self-sacrifice in respect to one's personal dignity in being the first to make up a quarrel of this description. Lovers always torment themselves and vex each other with disputes of the kind, and they are very sorry for it afterwards. If each would only exercise a little forbearance and a command of temper, there would be no such falling-out, and much unhappiness would be spared them.

JOSEPHINE.—Concerning the origin of the forget-me-not, tradition tells how this name came to be applied to the plant which now bears it. It is that a lady and a knight were walking by the side of the Danube, interchanging vows of devotion and affection, when the former saw on the other side of the stream the bright blue flowers of the myosotis, expressed a desire for them. The knight, eager to gratify her, plunged into the river, and reaching the opposite bank, gathered a bunch of flowers. On his return, however, the current proved too strong for him, and, after many efforts to reach the land, he was borne away. With a last effort he flung the fatal blossom upon the bank, exclaiming, as he did so, "Forget me not!"

MRS. E.—No special study will make one an accomplished essayist, if nature has not given the gift of composition together with the needed mental qualities. Practice and study of good models will of course improve the native style, so far as the mere mechanism of literature goes, but that is all. In your case you would do well to read such writers as Johnson, Emerson, Carlyle, Lamb, Hazlitt, and various volumes of "The Spectator," all of which may be had in almost any large library. Thus your taste and judgment will gradually form, and you will be in a position to choose what will most benefit you. But while engaged on the above, read everything else that comes to your hand, for use and entertainment, if not for study. We are of the opinion that the literary faculty thrives most when fed on what it likes. 2. Judging character by handwriting is in great part only guesswork. Deciphering yours, we would say you were small and neat in person as well as in habits. Exact, truthful, orderly and ambitious. You are young, fond of pleasant surroundings, and affectionate. Your chief fault—if it is one in the long run—is a tendency to make too much of little things. 3. See latter part of answer to D. M.